ÆSOP'S FABLES:

A New Version,

CHIEFLY FROM THE ORIGINAL SOURCES.

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WITH MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS
DESIGNED BY TENNIEL AND WOLF.

"Equidem omni cura morem servabo Senis
Sed si libuerit aliquid interponere
Dictorum sensus ut delectet varietas,
Bonas in partes, lector, accipias velim."—PHÆDRUS

SIXTY-EIGHTH THOUSAND.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1874.

LONDON:
R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS,
BREAD STREET HILL.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE LIFE AND FABLES OF ÆSOP.

In the days of Crœsus, King of Lydia, when Amasis was Pharaoh of Egypt, and Peisistratus lorded it over the Athenians—between five and six hundred years before the Christian era—lived ÆSOPUS, no inapt representative of the great social and intellectual movement of the age which he adorned.

Born a slave, with no outward circumstances of fortune to recommend him to the notice of the great, he forced his way by his mother-wit into the courts of princes, and laid the foundation of a fame, more universal, and perhaps more lasting in its influence, than that of all the Seven Wise Men of Greece, his worthy contemporaries.

Up to this time, whatever wisdom from without had guided the councils of princes, had been derived from the traditionary lore of courts, or from the verses of bards, hallowed by time, or impromptued for the occasion. Writing was as yet only known in the inscription on the public marble, or on the private

tablet. Religion and History were handed down from mouth to mouth, and, the better to be remembered, were committed to metre. With the sixth century before Christ commences the era of Written Classic Literature. The great convulsion of the Eastern nations, and the first direct and sustained intercourse of the Oriental with the Grecian mind, tended to call forth all the latent energies of either people. New combinations of governments, and strange commixtures of races, required new systems of politics, and more stringent and definite laws. Hence this is the age of Wise Men and of Prose. Even wealthy Crœsus discovered that knowledge was power, and assembled around him from every nation all who had gained a reputation for superior wisdom.

The flights of imagination began to give way to the serious business of life. It was an age of grave talkers, and inquisitive travellers,—of gathering the works of the great Poets to preserve the wisdom of antiquity, and of collecting facts for the use of the new order of things. Distinctions of birth and country were less heeded, and Wit was listened to even from the lips of a foreign slave. It was even able to emancipate itself, not only from the bondage of custom, but from actual bodily slavery, and Æsop came to the court of Crœsus, from his old master Iadmon, a free man—working his way to fame by a more honourable road than that of his fellow-servant "Rhodopis the Fair," the celebrity of whose beauty and wealth at such a time, tells in a word how she had abused the one, and acquired the other.[1] Æsop's fame had probably preceded him, but less as a Sage than as a Wit. He seems a stepping-stone between the poetry which had gone before,

1 Herod. II. 134, 135.

and the prose that followed, making the politics and morals of the day his study, but clothing his lectures in the garb of Imagination and Fancy. There is no doubt that he quickly grew in favour with Crœsus by the mode in which he imparted his knowledge. While Solon held the schoolmaster's rod over the philosophical monarch, Æsop conciliated alike his will and his reason by timely drollery and subtilely-conveyed advice.[2] To this freedom from avowed dictation, was added a little well-directed flattery. He knew, that to be tolerated in courts, he must speak to please, or not speak at all;[3] and when all the Seven Sages had given judgment, the Phrygian was sometimes set down as the best man of them all.[4]

If we should hence look upon him as little more than a court-jester, we shall be doing him great wrong. He came to amuse, but he remained to instruct; and Crœsus probably learnt more home-truths from his fictions,[5] than from all the serious disquisitions of his retained philosophers. Wherever he went he lifted up his voice in the same strain. At Corinth he warned his hearers against mob-law, in a fable which Socrates afterwards turned into verse.[6] At Athens, by the recital of "The Frogs and Jupiter," he gave a lesson both to prince and people.[7] His visit to Delphi seems to have had less of a political object. He was sent as a commissioner by Crœsus to distribute some payment due to the Delphians,[8] and in the discharge of this duty incurred the displeasure of the citizens of that worlds-centre,—whose character

[2] Παίζων ἐν σπουδῇ.—Agathiæ Epigr. ap. Brunk.

[3] ὡς ἥκιστα ἢ ὡς ἥδιστα.—Plutar. vit. Sol. p. 94.

[4] μᾶλλον ὁ Φρύξ. Suid. in voc.—Apostolius Cent. XII. adag.

[5] σοφοῖς μύθοις καὶ πλάσμασι καίρια λέξας Agath. Epigr.

[6] Plat. Phæd. c. 12.—Diog. Laert. II. 42.

[7] Phæd. I. 2.

[8] Aristoph. Vesp. 1446.—Schol. ad loc.

seems to have been at all times but little in accordance with the sacred privileges they assumed. Probably even more from fear of his wit than from displeasure at his award,—and judging from the event, without any plea of justice,—the Delphians raised against him the vulgar cry, too often successful, of impiety and sacrilege. For once his ready weapon failed in its effect. He is said to have appealed to their reverence for the laws of hospitality, by the fable of "The Eagle and the Beetle," the germ probably of the existing story: but he appealed in vain. Their craft was in danger; and the enraged guardians of the temple of the great God of Greece, hurled the unfortunate fable-maker headlong from one of the Phædrian precipices.[9]

He was not unavenged. Plagues cursed the scene of his murder, and the conscience-smitten Delphians, many years afterwards, seeing in their calamities, as well they might, a punishment for their evil deed, proclaimed, again and again, their readiness to give compensation for his death to any one who could prove a title to the self-imposed fine. No other claimant appearing, it was awarded at length to Iadmon, the grandson of Iadmon (son of Hephæstopolius), Æsop's old master.[1] The proverb of "Æsop's blood," in after-times gave warning to his countrymen, that murder will not cry to Heaven in vain.[2]

There are no further authentic notices of Æsop's life, but there are abundant proofs of the estimation in which his words were held by the Athenians for many generations afterwards. To be able to tell a good story of Æsop at the club, was an

[9] Babrii. frag. ap. Apollon.—Suid. v. Φαιδριάς.

[1] Herod. II. 134.

[2] Αἰσώπειον αἷμα.—Zonaras, p. 90.

indispensable accomplishment of an Athenian gentleman; and he who had not got Æsop's Fables at his fingers' ends was looked upon as an illiterate dunce.[3] Indeed, to such an excess did this fickle and news-loving people run after an Æsopean fable, that there is no weakness of theirs more severely lashed than this by their satirists both in verse and prose. His practical wisdom was, however, as much regarded as his caustic humour; and the common tradition, that he appeared alive again and fought at Thermopylæ, tells more for the honour in which he was held as a patriot than a hundred authentic anecdotes.[4]

About two hundred years after his death, a statue of Æsop, the workmanship of Lysippus, was erected at Athens, and was placed in front of the statues of the Seven Sages.[5]

The ridiculous particulars of his life and person, as they are commonly given, are but a compilation, made in the middle ages, of sorry jokes borrowed from various quarters, with enough of older fact and tradition to give them a sort of plausible consistency. The whole has been attributed to the imagination of Planudes, a monk of the fourteenth century; but there seems little reason for believing that he did more than collect what he found already made to his hand.

Æsop's personal deformity and swarthy complexion have not the slightest testimony from ancient authority. The negative evidence, which in this case is strong, tells all the other way, though Bentley has carried his argument rather too far in trying hence to prove that he must have been remarkably handsome.[6] The oldest authority in which his person is mentioned speaks of

[3] Aristoph. Vesp. 1260. Av. 471.

[4] Suid. vv. Αἴσωπος—ἀναβιῶναι.

[5] Phæd. II. Ep. Agath. Epig.

[6] Dissert. Æs. Works, v. II. p. 286

his face and voice as contributing as much as his stories to the amusement of his company.[7]

It is not to be supposed that Æsop was absolutely the inventor of Fable.[8] Under this form, more or less developed, the earliest knowledge of every nation—at least of every Eastern nation—has been handed down. Poverty of language would, in the first instance, necessitate the use of metaphor, and the simile would follow, not far removed from parable and fable. The more intimate acquaintance with the habits of wild beasts, natural to an uncivilised life, would also suggest illustrations to be drawn from the ways of the wily fox, the timid deer, the noble lion; while a closer intercourse with them, even though that of enmity, would be apt to attribute not only human passions, but motives and feelings, and hence, speech.

In later times, when neither kings nor mobs would bear to look upon naked Truth, recourse to the style of primitive wisdom furnished an effective garb wherewith to clothe it. It flattered, by its appeal to national antiquity, and by exercising, without tasking, intellectual acuteness. Thus fable was not, in those times, a child's plaything, but a nation's primer. Tyranny and rebellion were alike stayed by this only word of the wise that passion would listen to. Very different in its nature from the old Myth, it was not the result of profound contemplative philosophy in a popular garb, but it was the off-hand, ready-made weapon of a man of action,—one who united presence of mind with presence of wit,—who saw his opportunity and knew how to use it.

The oldest Fable on record which we know to have been

[7] Himer. Orat. XIII. [8] Babr. procem. II. 1.

thus practically applied, is that of "The Trees and the Bramble," as found in Holy Writ.[a] When the Israelites, discontented at not having an earthly sovereign, had allowed Abimelech, the base son of Gideon, to usurp a kingly authority over them, Jotham, whose better claims had been passed over by them, addressed them in the fable of

THE TREES AND THE BRAMBLE.

The Trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the Olive-tree: "Reign thou over us;" but the Olive-tree said unto them, "Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?" And the trees said to the Fig-tree: "Come thou and reign over us;" but the Fig-tree said unto them: "Should I forsake my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?" Then said the trees unto the Vine: "Come thou and reign over us;" and the Vine said unto them: "Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?" Then said all the trees unto the Bramble: "Come thou and reign over us:" and the Bramble said unto the trees: "If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the Bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon."

No less effective was Nathan's parable of "The Ewe-lamb" addressed to King David, with its terrible application, "THOU ART THE MAN."[1]

[a] Judges ix. 7.

[1] II. Sam. 12.

In like manner Fables effected their work in the politics of Greece. The citizens of Himera were warned by Stesichorus against the encroachments of the tyrant Phalaris, by the recital of "The Horse and the Stag."[2] A timely lesson was given to Peisistratus and the Athenians by the fable of "The Frogs and Jupiter."[3] The Samians, when they would have put to death one who had battened upon the public treasury, were checked by Æsop's introduction of "The Fox and the Hedgehog."[4] When the Ionians, who had rejected a previous invitation of Cyrus to join him, sent ambassadors to him after his success, offering him terms, the indignant conqueror gave them no other reply than the story of "The Fisherman piping."[5] Demosthenes turned the pliant mind of the Athenians when they were ready to betray him into Philip's hands, by warning them in "The Wolves and the Sheep," lest, in giving up the public orators, they surrendered the watch-dogs of the state. And, on another occasion, when the people would not hear him speaking on a serious matter of public business, he called them to an acknowledgment of their frivolity, and to a sense of their duty, by commencing the fable of "The Ass's Shadow."[6]

Roman history furnishes the celebrated instance of Menenius Agrippa quelling an insurrection by reciting "The Belly and the Members;"[7] and Scotland supplies the character of Archibald "Bell-the-Cat."[8]

The present book of Fables is not, of course, put forward as the

[2] Arist. Rhet. II. 20.

[3] Phaedr. I. 2.

[4] Arist. Rhet. II. 20;—afterwards applied by Tiberius to the extortionate prefects of the Roman provinces.

[5] Herod. I. 141.

[6] Vit. Demosth. ad. fin.

[7] Liv. II. 32.

[8] W. Scott's Scotland, Ch. XXII.

veritable words of Æsop. The date of his life, and the nature of the composition, alike forbid us to suppose that his Fables were committed to writing by the author himself. Nor if such a work, as an authentic collection of them, ever existed, could the common Greek text lay any claim to that title. It would, however, be equally absurd to adopt the alternative usually given, that the whole or the greater part of the existing Fables are the composition of monks of the middle ages.

The history of Æsopean Fable seems rather to be this. Æsop was one of the first and most successful in adopting this kind of apologue as a general vehicle of instruction. Being striking in point, and easy of remembrance, his stories were soon bandied about from mouth to mouth, and handed down from generation to generation, with such alterations as are ever attendant on oral narration.

In later times, writers, equally with speakers, preserving the traditionary outline of the fable, filled it up in their own words; while all the good stories afloat upon the surface of conversation became, naturally enough, referred to the great master in that style of composition. The popularity of Æsop's Fables among the Athenians soon became unbounded. We find them continually referred to in the works of the best Greek authors. Socrates relieved the monotony of his prison-hours by turning them into verse; Demetrius Phalereus and others followed in the same course; and after a considerable interval, we have them presented anew in the Greek choliambics of Babrius, and in the Latin iambics of Phædrus. Certainly Phædrus, and probably the other older and later versionists, made divers alterations, and sometimes inserted additional Fables of their own.

From all these various sources the bulk of the existing Fables is derived. This will account for the variety of versions, sometimes as many as six or seven, of the same Fable; while the late dialect of the Greek text, and the occasional obvious interpolation of Christian forms of speech and sentiment—though indications of the hands through which the Fables were last transmitted—need not drive us from the conclusion that we have, in the main, both the spirit and body of Æsop's Fables, if not as they proceeded from the Sage's own lips, at least as they were known in the best times of Greek literature.

This collection of Fables—the most popular Moral and Political Class-book of more than two thousand years—it has been the object of the Translator to restore, in a more genuine form than has yet been attempted, into the hands of the present generation, from which the wearisome and otherwise objectionable paraphrases of the ordinary versions had almost banished it.

The recent happy discovery of the long-lost Fables of Babrius. and their opportune appearance in this country in the excellent edition of Mr. George Cornewall Lewis, suggested the idea that by a recurrence to the Greek texts, and by collating and sifting the various ancient versions, a nearer approach might be gained to the true Æsopean Fable than has yet been proposed in any English collection.

In the present Version, however, no strict and definite plan of translation has been followed. Though the general rule has been to give a free translation from the oldest source to which the Fable could be traced, or from its best later form in the dead languages, there will be found exceptional cases

of all kinds. Some are compounded out of many ancient versions: some are a collation of ancient and modern: some are abridged, some interpolated: one takes the turn of a Greek epigram, another follows the lively and diffusive gossip of Horace: some walk more in the track of the Greek verse of Babrius, some in that of the Latin verse of Phædrus: a few adopt the turn given by L'Estrange, or speak almost in the very words of Croxall or Dodsley.[1]

This method of translation—wholly without excuse, if applied to a genuine classic—will, perhaps, be deemed admissible for a popular volume of Æsopean Fables, seeing that it is neither more nor less than has happened to them since the days when the Sage first scattered his Apologues on the wide waters of society, to be taken up and treated as suited the whim or purpose of subsequent recounters and versionists, from Socrates to Mrs. Trimmer.

A greater liberty has been taken with those venerable deductions which are usually appended in set form to the Fable, under the title of Morals, or Applications; and in this, an essential departure has been made from the common plan of the English Fabulists, who have generally smothered the original Fable under an overpowering weight of their own commentary. Of course, when Fables were first spoken, they were supposed to convey their own moral along with them, or else they were spoken in vain; and even when first written, the application given was that of the particular occasion, not of general inference. When in later times, Morals were formally added, they were always brief, and mostly in a proverbial form. To this character it has been attempted to recal

[1] A few modern fables, marked (M) in the Index, have been inserted.

them, though, in some instances, they are incorporated with the Fable, and in others, where the story seems to speak for itself, omitted altogether.

It would be quite unnecessary for the Translator to suggest, even in an age much less pictorial than the present, how much this Book is indebted for any value it may possess to the illustrations of the Artist; but he cannot close his own portion of the work without expressing how greatly the pleasure of the undertaking has been enhanced to him by having such a coadjutor:—a pleasure which has arisen no less from the kindly spirit of Mr. Tenniel's co-operation, than from the happy results of his skill.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

ÆSOP'S FABLES.

FABLE 1.—THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

A Fox, just at the time of the vintage, stole into a vineyard where the ripe sunny Grapes were trellised up on high in most tempting show. He made many a spring and a jump after the luscious prize; but, failing in all his attempts, he muttered as he retreated, "Well! what does it matter? The Grapes are sour!"



Fable 2.—THE BOWMAN AND THE LION.

A Man who was very skilful with his bow, went up into the mountains to hunt. At his approach there was instantly a great consternation and rout among all the wild beasts, the Lion alone showing any determination to fight. "Stop," said the Bowman to him, "and await my messenger, who has somewhat to say to you." With that, he sent an arrow after the Lion, and wounded him in the side. The Lion, smarting with anguish, fled into the depth of the thickets, but a Fox seeing him run, bade him take courage, and face his enemy. "No," said the Lion, "you will not persuade me to that; for if the messenger he sends is so sharp, what must be the power of him who sends it?"

Fable 3.—THE KITE AND THE PIGEONS.

Some Pigeons had long lived in fear of a Kite, but by being always on the alert, and keeping near their dove-cote, they had contrived hitherto to escape the attacks of the enemy. Finding his sallies unsuccessful, the Kite betook himself to craft: "Why," said he, "do you prefer this life of continual anxiety, when, if you would only make me your king, I would secure you from every attack that could be made upon you?" The Pigeons, trusting to his professions, called him to the throne; but no sooner was he established there than he exercised his prerogative by devouring a pigeon a-day. Whereupon one that yet awaited his turn, said no more than "It serves us right."

They who voluntarily put power into the hand of a tyrant or an enemy, must not wonder if it be at last turned against themselves.



FABLE 4.—THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

A Fox had fallen into a well, and had been casting about for a long time how he should get out again; when at length a Goat came to the place, and wanting to drink, asked Reynard whether the water was good, and if there was plenty of it. The Fox, dissembling the real danger of his case, replied, "Come down, my friend; the water is so good that I cannot drink enough of it, and so abundant that it cannot be exhausted." Upon this the Goat without any more ado leaped in; when the Fox, taking advantage of his friend's horns, as nimbly leaped out; and coolly remarked to the poor deluded Goat,—"If you had half as much brains as you have beard, you would have looked before you leaped."



Fable 5.—THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

A Wolf had got a bone stuck in his throat, and in the greatest agony ran up and down, beseeching every animal he met to relieve him: at the same time hinting at a very handsome reward to the successful operator. A Crane, moved by his entreaties and promises, ventured her long neck down the Wolf's throat, and drew out the bone. She then modestly asked for the promised reward. To which, the Wolf, grinning and showing his teeth, replied with seeming indignation, "Ungrateful creature! to ask for any other reward than that you have put your head into a Wolf's jaws, and brought it safe out again!"

Those who are charitable only in the hope of a return, must not be surprised if, in their dealings with evil men, they meet with more jeers than thanks.



FABLE 6.—THE VAIN JACKDAW.

A JACKDAW, as vain and conceited as Jackdaw could be, picked up the feathers which some Peacocks had shed, stuck them amongst his own, and despising his old companions, introduced himself with the greatest assurance into a flock of those beautiful birds. They, instantly detecting the intruder, stripped him of his borrowed plumes, and falling upon him with their beaks, sent him about his business. The unlucky Jackdaw, sorely punished and deeply sorrowing, betook himself to his former companions, and would have flocked with them again as if nothing had happened. But they, recollecting what airs he had given himself, drummed him out of their society, while one of those whom he had so lately despised, read him this lecture:—"Had you been contented with what nature made you, you would have escaped the chastisement of your betters and also the contempt of your equals."

Fable 7.—THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

On a cold frosty day an Ant was dragging out some of the corn which he had laid up in summer time, to dry it. A Grasshopper, half-perished with hunger, besought the Ant to give him a morsel of it to preserve his life. "What were you doing" said the Ant, "this last summer?" "Oh," said the Grasshopper, "I was not idle. I kept singing all the summer long." Said the Ant, laughing and shutting up his granary, "Since you could sing all summer, you may dance all winter."

Winter finds out what Summer lays by.

Fable 8.—THE BOY AND THE SCORPION.

A Boy was hunting Locusts upon a wall, and had caught a great number of them; when, seeing a Scorpion, he mistook it for another Locust, and was just hollowing his hand to catch it, when the Scorpion, lifting up his sting, said: "I wish you had done it, for I would soon have made you drop me, and the Locusts into the bargain."

Fable 9.—THE WIDOW AND THE HEN.

A Widow woman kept a Hen that laid an egg every morning. Thought the woman to herself, "If I double my Hen's allowance of barley, she will lay twice a-day." So she tried her plan, and the Hen became so fat and sleek, that she left off laying at all.

Figures are not always facts.



FABLE 10.

THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

IN days of yore, a mighty rumbling was heard in a Mountain. It was said to be in labour, and multitudes flocked together, from far and near, to see what it would produce. After long expectation and many wise conjectures from the bystanders—out popped, a Mouse!

The story applies to those whose magnificent promises end in a paltry performance.



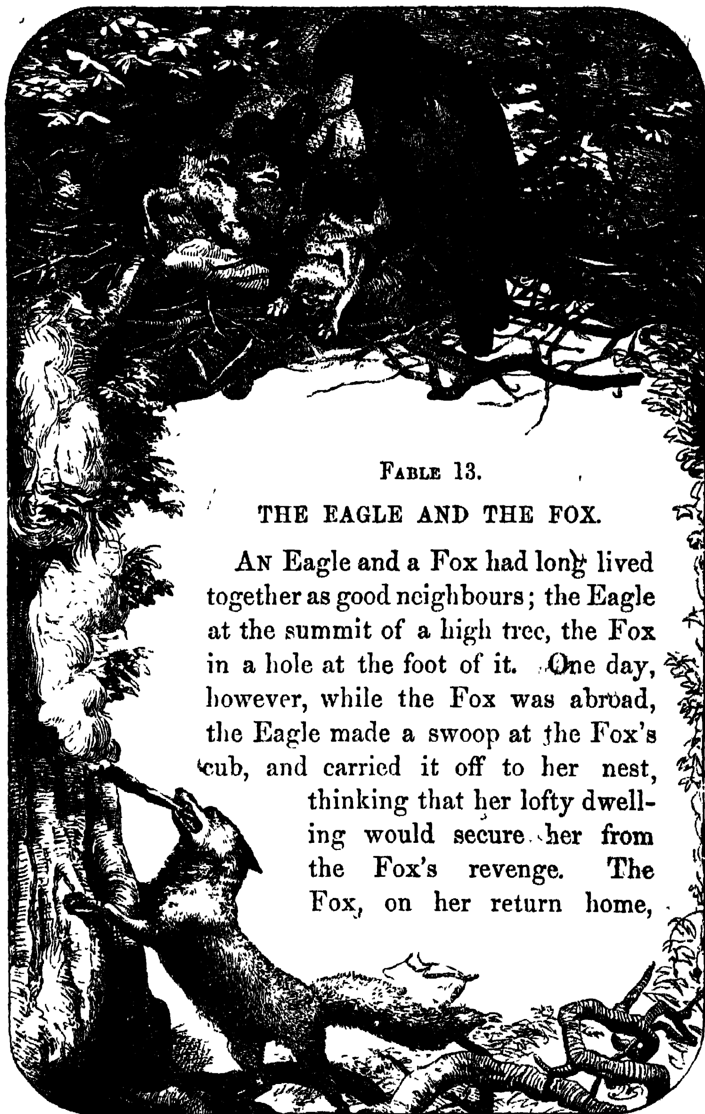
Fable 11.—THE COCK AND THE JEWEL.

As a Cock was scratching up the straw in a farm-yard, in search of food for the hens, he hit upon a Jewel that by some chance had found its way there. "Ho!" said he, "you are a very fine thing, no doubt, to those who prize you; but give me a barley-corn before all the pearls in the world."

The Cock was a sensible Cock: but there are many silly people who despise what is precious only because they cannot understand it.

Fable 12.—THE KID AND THE WOLF.

A Kid being mounted on the roof of a lofty house, and seeing a Wolf pass below, began to revile him. The Wolf merely stopped to reply, "Coward! it is not you who revile me, but the place on which you are standing."



Fable 13.

THE EAGLE AND THE FOX.

An Eagle and a Fox had long lived together as good neighbours; the Eagle at the summit of a high tree, the Fox in a hole at the foot of it. One day, however, while the Fox was abroad, the Eagle made a swoop at the Fox's cub, and carried it off to her nest, thinking that her lofty dwelling would secure her from the Fox's revenge. The Fox, on her return home,

upbraided the Eagle for this breach of friendship, and begged earnestly to have her young one again; but finding that her entreaties were of no avail, she snatched a torch from an altar-fire that had been lighted hard by, and involving the whole tree in flame and smoke, soon made the Eagle restore, through fear for herself and her own young ones, the cub which she had just now denied to her most earnest prayers.

The tyrant, though he may despise the tears of the oppressed, is never safe from their vengeance.

Fable 14.—THE FAWN AND HER MOTHER.

A Fawn one day said to her mother, "Mother, you are bigger than a dog, and swifter and better winded, and you have horns to defend yourself; how is it that you are so afraid of the hounds?" She smiled and said, "All this, my child, I know full well; but no sooner do I hear a dog bark, than, somehow or other, my heels take me off as fast as they can carry me."

There is no arguing a coward into courage.

Fable 15.—THE FOX AND THE LION.

A Fox who had never seen a Lion, when by chance he met him for the first time, was so terrified that he almost died of fright. When he met him the second time, he was still afraid, but managed to disguise his fear. When he saw him the third time, he was so much emboldened that he went up to him and asked him how he did.

Familiarity breeds contempt.



Fable 16.—THE OLD HOUND.

A Hound, who had been an excellent one in his time, and had done good service to his master in the field, at length became worn out with the weight of years and trouble. One day, when hunting the wild boar, he seized the creature by the ear, but his teeth giving way, he was forced to let go his hold, and the boar escaped. Upon this the huntsman, coming up, severely rated him. But the feeble Dog replied, "Spare your old servant! It was the power not the will that failed me. Remember rather what I was, than abuse me for what I am."

Fable 17.—THE HORSE AND THE GROOM.

A Groom who used to steal and sell a Horse's corn, was yet very busy in grooming and wisping him all the day long. "If you really wish me," said the Horse, "to look well, give me less of your currying and more of your corn."



FABLE 18.—THE FIGHTING-COCKS AND THE EAGLE.

Two young Cocks were fighting as fiercely as if they had been men. At last the one that was beaten crept into a corner of the hen-house, covered with wounds. But the conqueror, straightway flying up to the top of the house, began clapping his wings and crowing, to announce his victory. At this moment an Eagle, sailing by, seized him in his talons and bore him away; while the defeated rival came out from his hiding-place, and took possession of the dunghill for which they had contended.



FABLE 19.—THE TWO WALLETS.

EVERY man carries two Wallets, one before and one behind, and both full of faults. But the one before, is full of his neighbour's faults; the one behind, of his own. Thus it happens that men are blind to their own faults, but never lose sight of their neighbour's.



Fable 20.—THE COUNTRYMAN AND THE SNAKE.

A Countryman, returning home one winter's day, found a Snake by the hedge-side, half dead with cold. Taking compassion on the creature, he laid it in his bosom, and brought it home to his fireside to revive it. No sooner had the warmth restored it, than it began to attack the children of the cottage. Upon this the Countryman, whose compassion had saved its life, took up a mattock and laid the Snake dead at his feet.

Those who return evil for good, may expect their neighbour's pity to be worn out at last.

Fable 21.—THE MOUSE AND THE FROG.

A Mouse, in an evil day, made acquaintance with a Frog, and they set off on their travels together. The Frog, on pretence of great affection, and of keeping his companion out of harm's way, tied the Mouse's fore-foot to his own hind-leg, and thus they proceeded for some distance by land. Presently they came to some water, and the Frog, bidding the Mouse have good courage, began to swim across. They had scarcely, however, arrived midway, when the Frog took a sudden plunge to the bottom, dragging the unfortunate Mouse after him. But the struggling and floundering of the Mouse made so great commotion in the water that it attracted the attention of a Kite, who, pouncing down, and bearing off the Mouse, carried away the Frog at the same time in his train.

Inconsiderate and ill-matched alliances generally end in ruin: and the man who compasses the destruction of his neighbour, is often caught in his own snare.

Fable 22.—THE FISHERMAN PIPING.

A Man, who cared more for his notes than his nets, seeing some fish in the sea, began playing on his pipe, thinking that they would jump out on shore. But finding himself disappointed, he took a casting-net, and inclosing a great multitude of fish, drew them to land. When he saw the fish dancing and flapping about, he smiled, and said, "Since you would not dance when I piped, I will have none of your dancing now."

It is a great art to do the right thing at the right season.



FABLE 23.—THE MAN AND THE SATYR.

A MAN and a Satyr, having struck up an acquaintance, sat down together to eat. The day being wintry and cold, the Man put his fingers to his mouth, and blew upon them. "What's that for, my friend?" asked the Satyr. "My hands are so cold," said the Man; "I do it to warm them." In a little while some hot food was placed before them, and the Man, raising the dish to his mouth, again blew upon it. "And what's the meaning of that, now?" said the Satyr. "Oh," replied the Man, "my porridge is so hot, I do it to cool it." "Nay then," said the Satyr, "from this moment I renounce your friendship, for I will have nothing to do with one who blows hot and cold with the same mouth."



Fable 24.—THE DOG AND THE SHADOW.

A Dog had stolen a piece of meat out of a butcher's shop, and was crossing a river on his way home, when he saw his own shadow reflected in the stream below. Thinking that it was another dog, with another piece of meat, he resolved to make himself master of that also; but in snapping at the supposed treasure, he dropped the bit he was carrying, and so lost all.

Grasp at the shadow and lose the substance—the common fate of those who hazard a real blessing for some visionary good.

Fable 25.—THE MOON AND HER MOTHER.

The Moon once asked her Mother to make her a little cloak that would fit her well. "How," replied she, "can I make you a cloak to fit you, who are now a New Moon, and then a Full Moon, and then again neither one nor the other?"



FABLE 26.—THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

As a Wolf was lapping at the head of a running brook, he spied a stray Lamb paddling, at some distance, down the stream. Having made up his mind to seize her, he bethought himself how he might justify his violence. "Villain!" said he, running up to her, "how dare you muddle the water that I am drinking?" "Indeed," said the Lamb humbly, "I do not see how I can disturb the water, since it runs from you to me, not from me to you." "Be that as it may," replied the Wolf, "it was but a year ago that you called me many ill names." "Oh, Sir!" said the Lamb, trembling, "a year ago I was not born." "Well," replied the Wolf, "if it was not you, it was your father, and that is all the same; but it is no use trying to argue me out of my supper;"—and with-

out another word he fell upon the poor helpless Lamb and tore her to pieces.

A tyrant never wants a plea. And they have little chance of resisting the injustice of the powerful whose only weapons are innocence and reason.

FABLE 27.—THE FLIES AND THE HONEY-POT.

A POT of honey having been upset in a grocer's shop, the Flies came around it in swarms to eat it up, nor would they move from the spot while there was a drop left. At length their feet became so clogged that they could not fly away, and stifled in the luscious sweets they exclaimed, "Miserable creatures that we are, who for the sake of an hour's pleasure, have thrown away our lives!"

FABLE 28.—THE CREAKING WHEELS.

As some Oxen were dragging a waggon along a heavy road, the Wheels set up a tremendous creaking. "Brute!" cried the driver to the waggon; "why do you groan, when they who are drawing all the weight are silent?"

Those who cry loudest are not always the most hurt.

FABLE 29.—THE BEAR AND THE FOX.

A BEAR used to boast of his excessive love for Man, saying that he never worried or mauled him when dead. The Fox observed, with a smile, "I should have thought more of your profession, if you never ate him alive."

Better save a man from dying than salve him when dead.



FABLE 30.—THE COUNTRY MOUSE AND THE TOWN MOUSE.

ONCE upon a time a Country Mouse who had a friend in town invited him, for old acquaintance sake, to pay him a visit in the country. The invitation being accepted in due form, the Country Mouse, though plain and rough and somewhat frugal in his nature, opened his heart and store, in honour of hospitality and an old friend. There was not a carefully stored up morsel that he did not bring forth out of his larder, peas and barley, cheese-parings and nuts, hoping by quantity to make up what he feared was wanting in quality, to suit the palate of his dainty guest. The Town Mouse, condescending to pick a bit here and a bit there, while the host sat nibbling a blade of barley-straw at length exclaimed, "How is it, my good friend, that you can endure the dulness of this unpolished life? You are living like a toad in a hole. You can't really prefer these solitary rocks

and woods to streets teeming with carriages and men. On my honour, you are wasting your time miserably here. We must make the most of life while it lasts. A mouse, you know, does not live for ever. So come with me, and I'll show you life and the town." Overpowered with such fine words and so polished a manner, the Country Mouse assented; and they set out together on their journey to town. It was late in the evening when they crept stealthily into the city, and midnight ere they reached the great house, where the Town Mouse took up his quarters. Here were couches of crimson velvet, carvings in ivory, everything in short that denoted wealth and luxury. On the table were the remains of a splendid banquet, to procure which all the choicest shops in the town had been ransacked the day before. It was now the turn of the courtier to play the host; he places his country friend on purple, runs to and fro to supply all his wants, presses dish upon dish and dainty upon dainty, and, as though he were waiting on a king, tastes every course ere he ventures to place it before his rustic cousin. The Country Mouse, for his part, affects to make himself quite at home, and blesses the good fortune that had wrought such a change in his way of life; when, in the midst of his enjoyment, as he is thinking with contempt of the poor fare he has forsaken, on a sudden the door flies open, and a party of revellers returning from a late entertainment, bursts into the room. The affrighted friends jump from the table in the greatest consternation and hide themselves in the first corner they can reach. No sooner do they venture to creep out again than the barking of dogs drives them back in still greater terror than before. At length, when things seemed quiet, the Country Mouse stole out from his hiding-place, and bidding his friend good-bye, whispered in his ear, "Oh, my good sir, this fine mode of living may do for those who like it; but give me my barley bread in peace and security before the daintiest feast where Fear and Care are in waiting."



FABLE 31.—THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A LION was sleeping in his lair, when a Mouse, not knowing where he was going, ran over the mighty beast's nose and awakened him. The Lion clapped his paw upon the frightened little creature, and was about to make an end of him in a moment, when the Mouse, in pitiable tone, besought him to spare one who had so unconsciously offended, and not stain his honourable paws with so insignificant a prey. The Lion, smiling at his little prisoner's fright, generously let him go. Now it happened no long time after, that the Lion, while ranging the woods for his prey, fell into the toils of the hunters; and finding himself entangled without hope of escape, set up a roar that filled the whole forest with its echo. The Mouse, recognising the voice of his former preserver, ran to the spot, and without more ado set to work to nibble the knot in the cord that bound the Lion, and in ex-

short time set the noble beast at liberty; thus convincing him that kindness is seldom thrown away, and that there is no creature so much below another but that he may have it in his power to return a good office.

FABLE 32.—THE DOG, THE COCK, AND THE FOX.

A DOG and a Cock having struck up an acquaintance went out on their travels together. Nightfall found them in a forest; so the Cock flying up on a tree, perched among the branches, while the Dog dozed below at the foot. As the night passed away and the day dawned, the Cock, according to his custom, set up a shrill crowing. A Fox hearing him, and thinking to make a meal of him, came and stood under the tree, and thus addressed him:—"Thou art a good little bird, and most useful to thy fellow-creatures. Come down, then, that we may sing our matins and rejoice together." The Cock replied, "Go, my good friend, to the foot of the tree, and call the sacristan to toll the bell." But as the Fox went to call him, the Dog jumped out in a moment, and seized the Fox and made an end of him.

They who lay traps for others are often caught by their own bait.

FABLE 33.—THE GULL AND THE KITE.

A GULL had pounced upon a fish, and in endeavouring to swallow it got choked, and lay upon the deck for dead. A Kite who was passing by and saw him, gave him no other comfort than—"It serves you right: for what business have fowls of the air to meddle with the fish of the sea."



FABLE 34.—THE HOUSE-DOG AND THE WOLF.

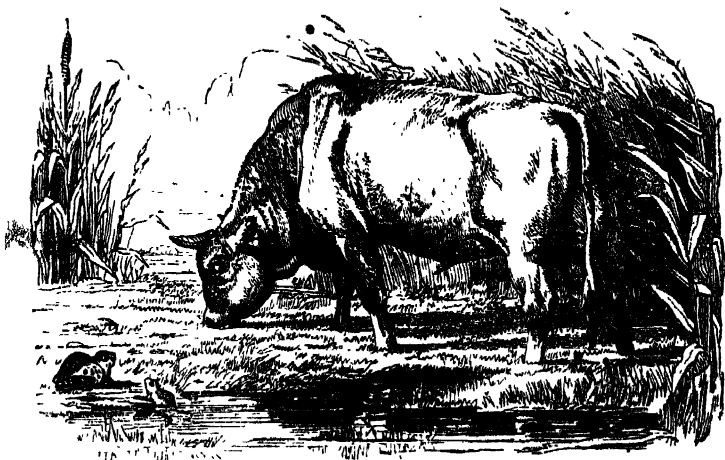
A LEAN hungry wolf chanced one moonshiny night to fall in with a plump well-fed House-Dog. After the first compliments were passed between them, "How is it, my friend," said the Wolf, "that you look so sleek? How well your food agrees with you! and here am I striving for my living night and day, and can hardly save myself from starving." "Well," says the Dog, "if you would fare like me, you have only to do as I do." "Indeed!" says he, "and what is that?" "Why," replies the Dog, "just to guard the master's house and keep off the thieves at night." "With all my heart; for at present I have but a sorry time of it. This woodland life, with its frosts and rains, is sharp work for me. To have a warm roof over my head and a bellyful of victuals always at hand will, methinks, be no bad exchange." "True," says the Dog; "therefore you have

nothing to do but to follow me." Now as they were jogging on together, the Wolf spied a mark in the Dog's neck, and having a strange curiosity, could not forbear asking what it meant. "Pooh! nothing at all," says the Dog. "Nay, but pray"—says the Wolf. "Oh! a mere trifle, perhaps the collar to which my chain is fastened—" "Chain!" cries the Wolf in surprise; "you don't mean to say that you cannot rove when and where you please?" "Why, not exactly perhaps; you see I am looked upon as rather fierce, so they sometimes tie me up in the day-time, but I assure you I have perfect liberty at night, and the master feeds me off his own plate, and the servants give me their tit-bits, and I am such a favourite, and—but what is the matter? where are you going?" "Oh, good night to you," says the Wolf; "you are welcome to your dainties; but for me, a dry crust with liberty against a king's luxury with a chain."

Fable 35.—The Old Woman and the Wine-Jar.



An Old Woman saw an empty Wine-jar lying on the ground. Though not a drop of the noble Falernian, with which it had been filled, remained, it still yielded a grateful fragrance to the passers-by. The Old Woman, applying her nose as close as she could and snuffing with all her might and main, exclaimed, "Sweet creature! how charming must your contents once have been, when the very dregs are so delicious!"



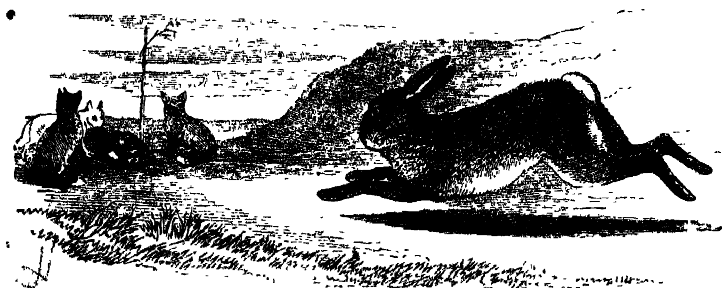
FABLE 36.—THE FROG AND THE OX.

AN OX, grazing in a swampy meadow, chanced to set his foot among a parcel of young Frogs, and crushed nearly the whole brood to death. One that escaped ran off to his mother with the dreadful news; "And, O mother!" said he, "it was a beast—such a big fourfooted beast!—that did it." "Big?" quoth the old Frog, "how big? was it as big"—and she puffed herself out to a great degree—"as big as this?" "Oh!" said the little one, "a great deal bigger than that." "Well, was it so big?" and she swelled herself out yet more. "Indeed, mother, but it was; and if you were to burst yourself, you would never reach half its size." Provoked at such a disparagement of her powers, the old Frog made one more trial, and burst herself indeed.

So men are ruined by attempting a greatness to which they have no claim.

Fable 37.—THE SICK STAG.

A Stag that had fallen sick, lay down on the rich herbage of a lawn, close to a wood-side, that she might obtain an easy pasturage. But so many of the Beasts came to see her—for she was a good sort of neighbour—that one taking a little, and another a little, they ate up all the grass in the place. So, though recovering from the disease, she pined for want, and in the end lost both her substance and her life.



Fable 38.—THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

A Hare jeered at a Tortoise for the slowness of his pace. But he laughed and said, that he would run against her and beat her any day she should name. "Come on," said the Hare, "you shall soon see what my feet are made of." So it was agreed that they should start at once. The Tortoise went off jogging along, without a moment's stopping, at his usual steady pace. The Hare, treating the whole matter very lightly, said she would first take a little nap, and that she should soon overtake the Tortoise. Meanwhile the Tortoise plodded on, and the Hare oversleeping herself, arrived at the goal, only to see that the Tortoise had got in before her.

Slow and steady wins the race.



FABLE 39.—THE TORTOISE AND THE EAGLE.

A TORTOISE, dissatisfied with his lowly life, when he beheld so many of the birds, his neighbours, disporting themselves in the clouds, and thinking that, if he could but once get up into the air, he could soar with the best of them, called one day upon an Eagle, and offered him all the treasures of Ocean if he could only teach him to fly. The Eagle would have declined the task, assuring him that the thing was not only absurd but impossible, but being further pressed by the entreaties and promises of the Tortoise, he at length consented to do for him the best he could. So taking him up to a great height in the air and loosing his hold upon him,

"Now, then!" cried the Eagle; but the Tortoise, before he could answer him a word, fell plump upon a rock, and was dashed to pieces.

Pride shall have a fall.

Fable 40.—THE MULE.

A Mule that had grown fat and wanton on too great an allowance of corn, was one day jumping and kicking about, and at length, cocking up her tail, exclaimed, "My dam was a Racer, and I am quite as good as ever she was" But being soon knocked up with her galloping and frisking, she remembered all at once that her sire was but an Ass.

Every truth has two sides; it is well to look at both, before we commit ourselves to either.

Fable 41.—THE CRAB AND HER MOTHER.

Said an old Crab to a young one, "Why do you walk so crooked, child? walk straight!" "Mother," said the young Crab, "show me the way, will you? and when I see you taking a straight course, I will try and follow."

Example is better than precept.

Fable 42.—THE LAMB AND THE WOLF.

A Lamb pursued by a Wolf took refuge in a temple. Upon this the Wolf called out to him, and said, that the priest would slay him if he caught him. "Be it so," said the Lamb: "it is better to be sacrificed to God, than to be devoured by you."



Fable 43.—THE SHEPHERD-BOY AND THE WOLF.

A Shepherd-boy, who tended his flock not far from a village, used to amuse himself at times in crying out "Wolf! Wolf!" Twice or thrice his trick succeeded. The whole village came running out to his assistance; when all the return they got was to be laughed at for their pains. At last, one day the

Wolf came indeed. The Boy cried out in earnest. But his neighbours, supposing him to be at his old sport, paid no heed to his cries, and the Wolf devoured the sheep. So the Boy learned, when it was too late, that liars are not believed even when they tell the truth.

Fable 44.—THE HEN AND THE CAT.

A Cat hearing that a Hen was laid up sick in her nest, paid her a visit of condolence; and creeping up to her said, "How are you, my dear friend? what can I do for you? what are you in want of? only tell me, if there is anything in the world that I can bring you; but keep up your spirits and don't be alarmed." "Thank you," said the Hen; "do you be good enough to leave me, and I have no fear but I shall soon be well."

Unbidden guests are often welcomest when they are gone.

Fable 45.—THE POMEGRANATE, THE APPLE, AND THE BRAMBLE.

The Pomegranate and the Apple had a contest on the score of beauty. When words ran high, and the strife waxed dangerous, a Bramble, thrusting his head from a neighbouring bush cried out, "We have disputed long enough; let there be no more rivalry betwixt us."

The most insignificant are generally the most presuming.



FABLE 46.—THE FOX AND THE WOODMAN.

A Fox, hard pressed by the hounds after a long run, came up to a man who was cutting wood, and begged him to afford him some place where he might hide himself. The man showed him his own hut, and the Fox creeping in, hid himself in a corner. The Hunters presently came up, and asking the man whether he had seen the Fox, "No," said he, but pointed with his finger to the corner. They, however, not understanding the hint, were off again immediately. When the Fox perceived that they were out of sight, he was stealing off without saying a word. But the man upbraided him, saying, "Is this the way you take leave of your host, without

a word of thanks for your safety." "A pretty host!" said the Fox, turning round upon him, "if you had been as honest with your fingers as you were with your tongue, I should not have left your roof without bidding you farewell."

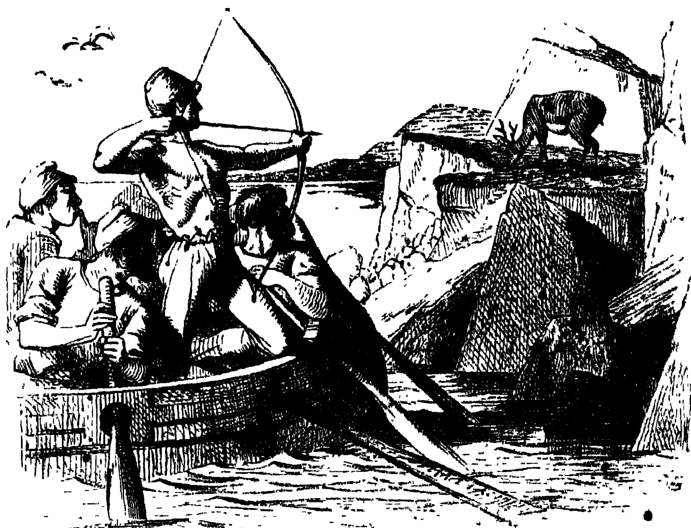
There is as much malice in a wink as in a word.



FABLE 47.—THE CROW AND THE PITCHER.

A CROW, ready to die with thirst, flew with joy to a Pitcher, which he saw at a distance. But when he came up to it, he found the water so low that with all his stooping and straining he was unable to reach it. Thereupon he tried to break the Pitcher; then to overturn it; but his strength was not sufficient to do either. At last, seeing some small pebbles at hand, he dropped a great many of them, one by one, into the Pitcher, and so raised the water to the brim, and quenched his thirst.

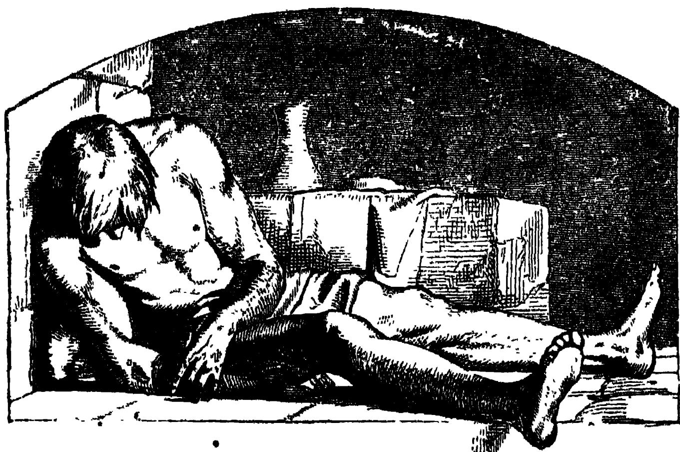
Skill and Patience will succeed where Force fails. Necessity is the Mother of Invention.



FABLE 48.- THE ONE-EYED DOE.

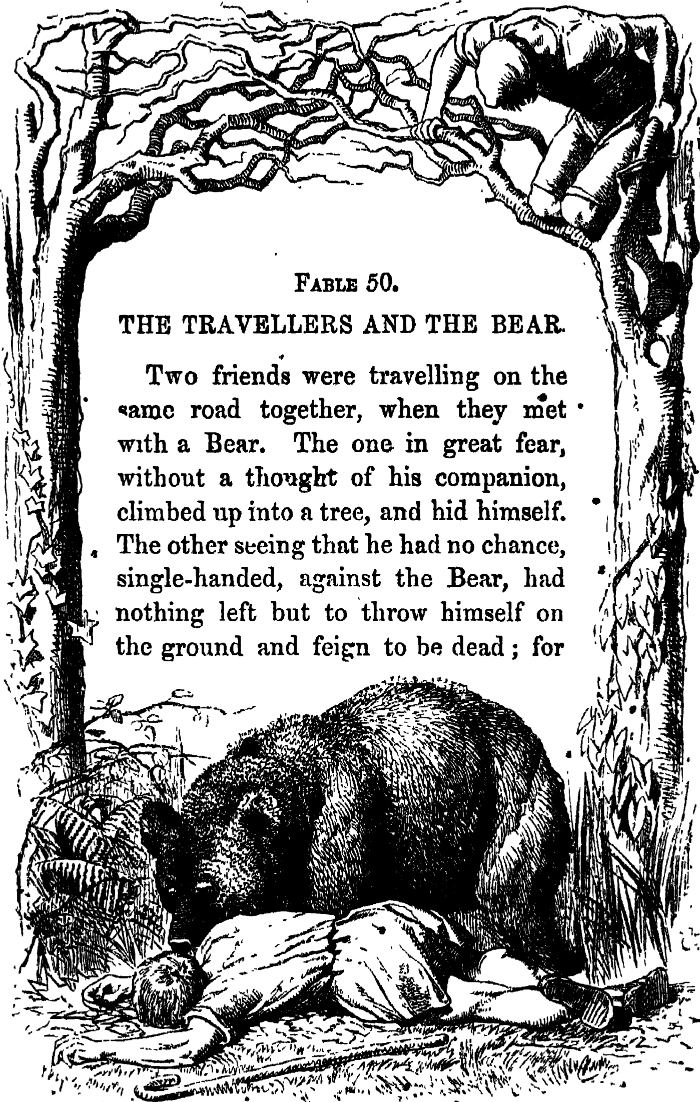
A DOE that had but one eye used to graze near the sea, and that she might be the more secure from attack, kept her eye towards the land against the approach of the hunters, and her blind side towards the sea, whence she feared no danger. But some sailors rowing by in a boat and seeing her, aimed at her from the water and shot her. When at her last gasp, she sighed to herself: "Ill-fated creature that I am! I was safe on the land-side whence I expected to be attacked, but find an enemy in the sea to which I most looked for protection."

Our troubles often come from the quarter whence we least expect them.



Fable 49.—THE BELLY AND THE MEMBERS.

In former days, when all a man's limbs did not work together as amicably as they do now, but each had a will and way of its own, the Members generally began to find fault with the Belly for spending an idle, luxurious life, while they were wholly occupied in labouring for its support, and ministering to its wants and pleasures; so they entered into a conspiracy to cut off its supplies for the future. The Hands were no longer to carry food to the Mouth, nor the Mouth to receive the food, nor the Teeth to chew it. They had not long persisted in this course of starving the Belly into subjection, ere they all began, one by one, to fail and flag, and the whole body to pine away. Then the Members were convinced that the Belly also, cumbersome and useless as it seemed, had an important function of its own; that they could no more do without it than it could do without them; and that if they would have the constitution of the body in a healthy state, they must work together, each in his proper sphere, for the common good of all.



FABLE 50.

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE BEAR.

Two friends were travelling on the same road together, when they met with a Bear. The one in great fear, without a thought of his companion, climbed up into a tree, and hid himself. The other seeing that he had no chance, single-handed, against the Bear, had nothing left but to throw himself on the ground and feign to be dead; for

he had heard that the Bear will never touch a dead body. As he thus lay, the Bear came up to his head, muzzling and snuffing at his nose and ears, and heart, but the man immovably held his breath, and the beast supposing him to be dead, walked away. When the Bear was fairly out of sight, his companion came down out of the tree, and asked what it was that the Bear whispered to him,—"for," says he, "I observed he put his mouth very close to your ear." "Why," replies the other, "it was no great secret; he only bade me have a care how I kept company with those who, when they get into a difficulty, leave their friends in the lurch."

FABLE 51.—THE LION, THE ASS, AND THE FOX, HUNTING.

THE Lion, the Ass, and the Fox formed a party to go out hunting. They took a large booty, and when the sport was ended bethought themselves of having a hearty meal. The Lion bade the Ass allot the spoil. So, dividing it into three equal parts, the Ass begged his friends to make their choice; at which the Lion, in great indignation, fell upon the Ass, and tore him to pieces. He then bade the Fox make a division; who, gathering the whole into one great heap, reserved but the smallest mite for himself. "Ah! friend," says the Lion, "who taught you to make so equitable a division?" "I wanted no other lesson," replied the Fox, "than the Ass's fate."

Better be wise by the misfortunes of others than by your own.



FABLE 52.—THE STAG IN THE OX-STALL.

A HUNTED Stag, driven out of covert and distracted by fear, made for the first farm-house he saw, and hid himself in an Ox-stall which happened to be open. As he was trying to conceal himself under the straw, "What can you mean," said an Ox, "by running into such certain destruction as to trust yourself to the haunts of man?" "Only do you not betray me," said the Stag, "and I shall be off again on the first opportunity." Evening came on; the herdsman foddered the cattle, but observed nothing. The other farm-servants came in and out. The Stag was still safe. Presently the bailiff passed through; all seemed right. The Stag now feeling himself quite secure began to thank the Oxen for their hospitality. "Wait awhile," said one of them; "we indeed wish you well, but there is yet another person, one with a hundred eyes; if he should happen to

come this way I fear your life will be still in jeopardy." While he was speaking, the Master, having finished his supper, came round to see that all was safe for the night, for he thought that his cattle had not of late looked as well as they ought. Going up to the rack, "Why so little fodder here?" says he; "Why is there not more straw?" And "How long, I wonder, would it take to sweep down these cobwebs!" Prying and observing here and there and everywhere, the Stag's antlers, jutting from out the straw, caught his eye, and calling in his servants he instantly made prize of him.

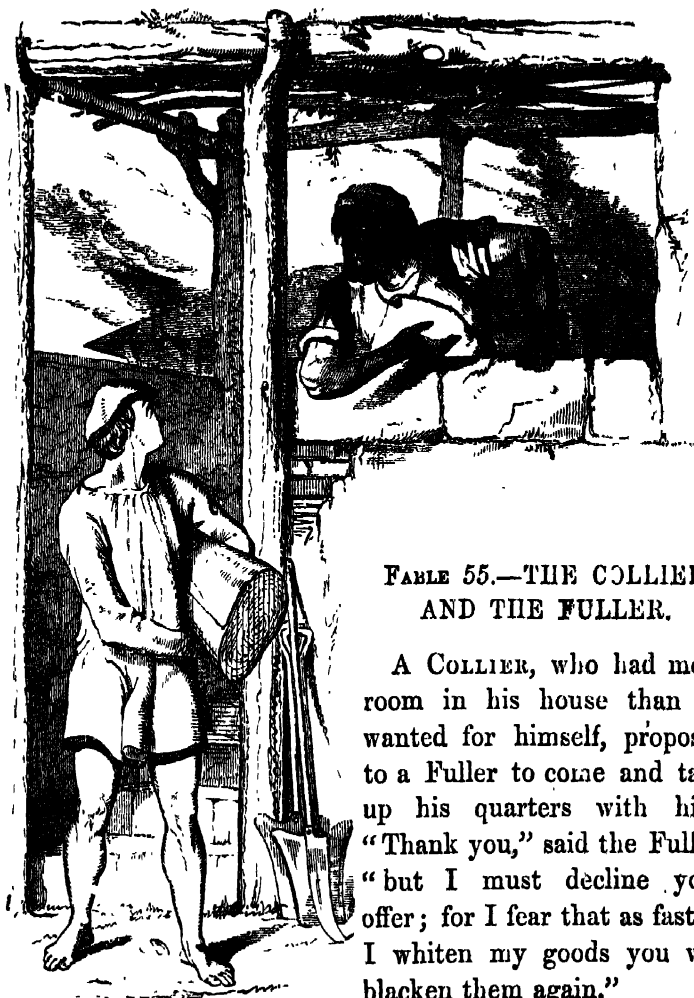
No eye like the Master's eye.

FABLE 53.—THE HARE AND THE HOUND.

A HOUND having put up a Hare from a bush, chased her for some distance, but the Hare had the best of it, and got off. A Goatherd who was coming by, jeered at the Hound, saying that Puss was the better runner of the two. "You forget," replied the Hound, "that it is one thing to be running for your dinner, and another for your life."

FABLE 54.—THE DOLPHINS AND THE SPRAT.

THE Dolphins and the Whales were at war with one another, and while the battle was at its height, the Sprat stepped in and endeavoured to separate them. But one of the Dolphins cried out, "Let us alone, friend! We had rather perish in the contest, than be reconciled by you."



FABLE 55.—THE COLLIER AND THE FULLER.

A COLLIER, who had more room in his house than he wanted for himself, proposed to a Fuller to come and take up his quarters with him. "Thank you," said the Fuller, "but I must decline your offer; for I fear that as fast as I whiten my goods you will blacken them again."

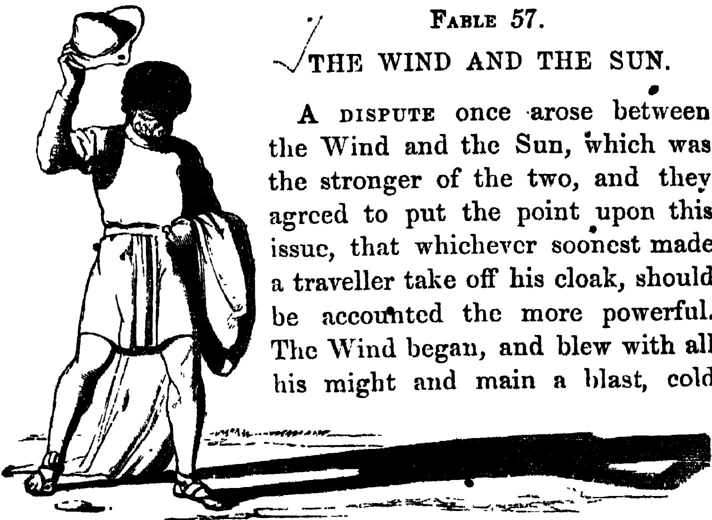
There can be little liking where there is no likeness.



Fable 56.—THE LION IN LOVE.

It happened in days of old that a Lion fell in love with a Woodman's daughter; and had the folly to ask her of her father in marriage. The Woodman was not much pleased with the offer, and declined the honour of so dangerous an alliance. But upon the Lion threatening him with his royal displeasure, the poor man, seeing that so formidable a creature was not to be denied, hit at length upon this expedient: "I feel greatly flattered," said he, "with your proposal; but, noble sir, what great teeth you have got! and what great claws you have got! where is the damsel that would not be frightened at such weapons as these? You must have your teeth drawn and your claws pared before you can be a suitable bridegroom for my daughter." The Lion straightway submitted (for what will not a body do for love?) and then called upon the father to accept him as a son-in-law. But the Woodman, no longer afraid of the tamed and disarmed bully, seized a stout cudgel, and drove the unreasonable suitor from his door.





FABLE 57.

THE WIND AND THE SUN.

A DISPUTE once arose between the Wind and the Sun, which was the stronger of the two, and they agreed to put the point upon this issue, that whichever soonest made a traveller take off his cloak, should be accounted the more powerful. The Wind began, and blew with all his might and main a blast, cold

and fierce as a Thracian storm; but the stronger he blew the closer the traveller wrapped his cloak around him, and the tighter he grasped it with his hands. Then broke out the Sun: with his welcome beams he dispersed the vapour and the cold; the traveller felt the genial warmth, and as the Sun shone brighter and brighter, he sat down, overcome with the heat, and cast his cloak on the ground.

Thus the Sun was declared the conqueror; and it has ever been deemed that persuasion is better than force; and that the sunshine of a kind and gentle manner will sooner lay open a poor man's heart than all the threatenings and force of blustering authority.



Fable 58.—THE FARMER AND HIS SONS.

A Farmer being on the point of death, and wishing to show his sons the way to success in farming, called them to him, and said, "My children, I am now departing from this life, but all that I have to leave you, you will find in the vineyard." The sons, supposing that he referred to some hidden treasure, as soon as the old man was dead, set to work with their spades and ploughs and every implement that was at hand, and turned up the soil over and over again. They found indeed no treasure; but the vines, strengthened and improved by this thorough tillage, yielded a finer vintage than they had ever yielded before, and more than repaid the young husbandmen for all their trouble. So truly is industry in itself a treasure.



FABLE 59.—THE TREES AND THE AXE.

A WOODMAN came into a forest to ask the Trees to give him a handle for his Axe. It seemed so modest a request that the principal Trees at once agreed to it, and it was settled among them that the plain homely Ash should furnish what was wanted. No sooner had the Woodman fitted the staff to his purpose, than he began laying about him on all sides, felling the noblest Trees in the wood. The Oak now seeing the whole matter too late, whispered to the Cedar, "The first concession has lost all; if we had not sacrificed our humble neighbour, we might have yet stood for ages ourselves."

When the rich surrender the rights of the poor, they give a handle to be used against their own privileges.



FABLE 60.—THE ASS AND THE LAP-DOG.

THERE was an Ass and a Lap-dog that belonged to the same master. The Ass was tied up in the stable, and had plenty of corn and hay to eat, and was as well off as Ass could be. The little Dog was always sporting and gambolling about, caressing and fawning upon his master in a thousand amusing ways, so that he became a great favourite, and was permitted to lie in his master's lap. The Ass, indeed, had enough to do; he was drawing wood all day, and had to take his turn at the mill at night. But while he grieved over his own lot, it galled him more to see the Lap-dog living in such ease and luxury; so thinking that if he acted a like part to his master, he should fare the same, he broke one day from his halter, and rushing into the hall began to kick and prance about in the strangest fashion; then swishing his

tail and mimicking the frolics of the favourite, he upset the table where his master was at dinner, breaking it in two and smashing all the crockery; nor would he leave off till he jumped upon his master, and pawed him with his rough-shod feet. The servants, seeing their master in no little danger, thought it was now high time to interfere, and having released him from the Ass's caresses, they so belaboured the silly creature with sticks and staves, that he never got up again; and as he breathed his last, exclaimed, "Why could not I have been satisfied with my natural position, without attempting, by tricks and grimaces, to imitate one who was but a puppy after all!"

Fable 61.—THE BLIND MAN AND THE WHELP.

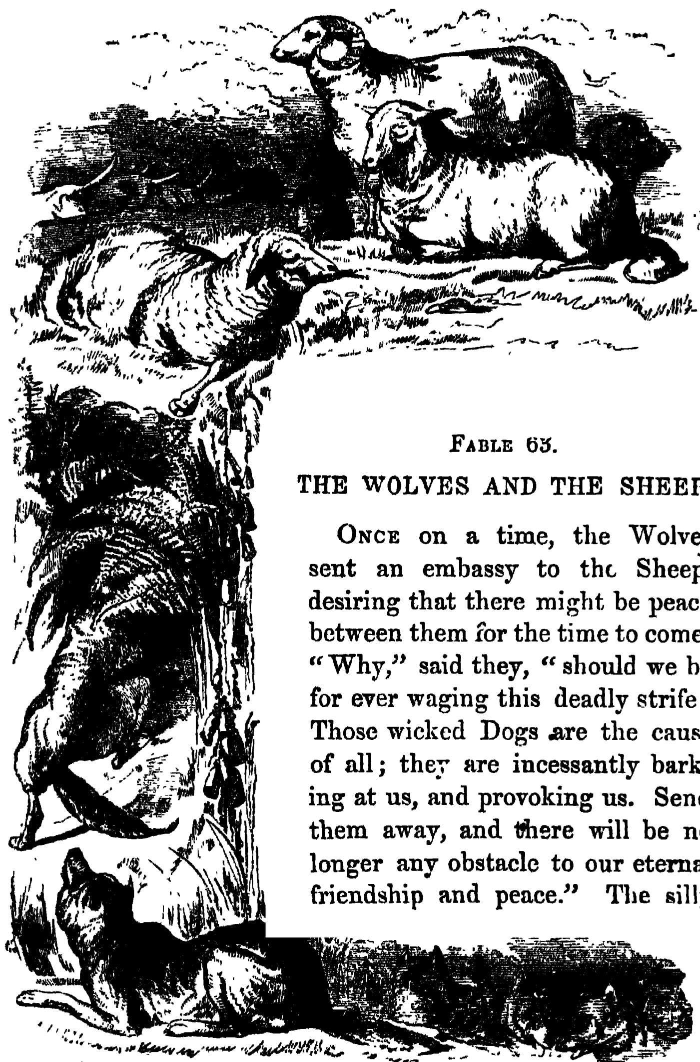
A Blind Man was wont, on any animal being put into his hands, to say what it was. Once they brought to him a Wolf's whelp. He felt it all over, and being in doubt, said, "I know not whether thy father was a Dog or a Wolf; but this I know, that I would not trust thee among a flock of sheep."

Evil dispositions are early shewn.

Fable 62.—THE DOVE AND THE CROW.

A Dove that was kept shut up in a cage was congratulating herself upon the number of her family. "Cease, good soul," said a Crow, "to boast on that subject; for the more young ones you have, so many more slaves will you have to groan over."

What are blessings in freedom are curses in slavery.



FABLE 65.

THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

ONCE on a time, the Wolves sent an embassy to the Sheep, desiring that there might be peace between them for the time to come. "Why," said they, "should we be for ever waging this deadly strife? Those wicked Dogs are the cause of all; they are incessantly barking at us, and provoking us. Send them away, and there will be no longer any obstacle to our eternal friendship and peace." The silly Sheep listened, the Dogs were dismissed, and the flock, thus deprived of their best protectors, became an easy prey to their treacherous enemy.

Fable 64.—THE LION AND THE FOX.

A Fox agreed to wait upon a Lion in the capacity of a servant. Each for a time performed the part belonging to his station; the Fox used to point out the prey, and the Lion fell upon it and seized it. But the Fox, beginning to think himself as good a beast as his master, begged to be allowed to hunt the game instead of finding it. His request was granted, but as he was in the act of making a descent upon a herd, the huntsmen came out upon him, and he was himself made the prize.

Keep to your place, and your place will keep you.

Fable 65.—JUPITER AND THE CAMEL.

When the Camel, in days of yore, besought Jupiter to grant him horns, for that it was a great grief to him to see other animals furnished with them, while he had none: Jupiter not only refused to give him the horns he asked for, but cropped his ears short for his importunity.

By asking too much, we may lose the little that we had before.

Fable 66.—THE ASS AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

An Ass hearing some Grasshoppers chirping, was delighted with the music, and determining, if he could, to rival them, asked them what it was that they fed upon to make them sing so sweetly? When they told him that they supped upon nothing but dew, the Ass betook himself to the same diet, and soon died of hunger.

One man's meat is another man's poison.



FABLE 67.

HERCULES AND THE WAGGONER.

As a Countryman was carelessly driving his waggon along a miry lane, his wheels stuck so deep in the clay that the horses came to a stand-still. Upon this the man, without making the least effort of his own, began to call upon Hercules to come and help



him out of his trouble. But Hercules bade him lay his shoulder to the wheel, assuring him that Heaven only aided those who endeavoured to help themselves.

It is in vain to expect our prayers to be heard, if we do not strive as well as pray.



FABLE 68.—THE FOX WITHOUT A TAIL.

A Fox being caught in a trap, was glad to compound for his neck by leaving his tail behind him; but upon coming abroad into the world, he began to be so sensible of the disgrace such a defect would bring upon him, that he almost wished he had died rather than come away without it. However, resolving to make the best of a bad matter, he called a meeting of the rest of the Foxes, and proposed that all should follow his example. "You have no notion," said he, "of the ease and comfort with which I now move about: I could never have believed it if I had not tried it myself; but really, when one comes to reason upon it, a tail is such an ugly, inconvenient, unnecessary appendage, that the only wonder is that, as Foxes, we could have put up with it so long. I propose, therefore, my worthy brethren, that you all profit by the experience that I am most willing to afford you, and that all Foxes from this day forward cut off their tails." Upon this one of the oldest stepped forward, and

said, "I rather think, my friend, that you would not have advised us to part with our tails, if there were any chance of recovering your own."

FABLE 69.—THE OLD WOMAN AND THE PHYSICIAN.

AN old Woman, who had become blind, called in a Physician, and promised him, before witnesses, that if he would restore her eyesight, she would give him a most handsome reward, but that if he did not cure her, and her malady remained, he should receive nothing. The agreement being concluded, the Physician tampered from time to time with the old lady's eyes, and meanwhile, bit by bit, carried off her goods. At length after a time he set about the task in earnest and cured her, and thereupon asked for the stipulated fee. But the old Woman, on recovering her sight, saw none of her goods left in the house. When, therefore, the Physician importuned her in vain for payment, and she continually put him off with excuses, he summoned her at last before the Judges. Being now called upon for her defence, she said, "What this man says is true enough; I promised to give him his fee if my sight were restored, and nothing if my eyes continued bad. Now then, he says that I am cured, but I say just the contrary; for when my malady first came on I could see all sorts of furniture and goods in my house; but now, when he says he has restored my sight, I cannot see one jot of either."

He who plays a trick must be prepared to take a joke.



FABLE 70.—THE HARES AND THE FROGS.

ONCE upon a time, the Hares, driven desperate by the many enemies that compassed them about on every side, came to the sad resolution that there was nothing left for them but to make away with themselves, one and all. Off they scudded to a lake hard by, determined to drown themselves as the most miserable of creatures. A shoal of Frogs seated upon the bank, frightened at the approach of the Hares, leaped in the greatest alarm and confusion into the water. "Nay, then, my friends," said a Hare that was foremost, "our case is not so desperate yet; for here are other poor creatures more faint-hearted than ourselves."

Take not comfort, but courage, from another's distress; and be sure, whatever your misery, that there are some whose lot you would not exchange with your own.



FABLE 71.—THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE STORK.

A HUSBANDMAN fixed a net in his field to catch the Cranes that came to feed on his new-sown corn. When he went to examine the net, and see what Cranes he had taken, a Stork was found among the number. "Spare me," cried the Stork, "and let me go. I am no Crane. I have eaten none of your corn. I am a poor innocent Stork, as you may see—the most pious and dutiful of birds. I honour and succour my father and mother. I——" But the Husbandman cut him short. "All this may be true enough, I dare say, but this I know, that I have caught you with those who were destroying my crops, and you must suffer with the company in which you are taken."

Ill company proves more than fair professions.



FABLE 72.—THE ANGLER AND THE LITTLE FISH.

AN Angler, who gained his livelihood by fishing, after a long day's toil, caught nothing but one little fish. "Spare me," said the little creature, "I beseech you; so small as I am, I shall make you but a sorry meal. I am not come to my full size yet; throw me back into the river for the present, and then, when I am grown bigger and worth eating, you may come here and catch me again." "No, no," said the man; "I have got you now, but if you once get back into the water, your tune will be, 'Catch me if you can.'"

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Fable 73.—THE MONKEY AND THE CAMEL.

At a great meeting of the Beasts, the Monkey stood up to dance. Having greatly distinguished himself, and being applauded by all present, it moved the spleen of the Camel, who came forward and began to dance also; but he made himself so utterly absurd, that all the Beasts in indignation set upon him with clubs and drove him out of the ring.

Stretch your arm no further than your sleeve will reach.

Fable 74.—THE MOLE AND HER MOTHER.

Said a young Mole to her mother, "Mother, I can see." So, in order to try her, her Mother put a lump of frankincense before her, and asked her what it was. "A stone," said the young one. "O, my child!" said the Mother, "not only do you not see, but you cannot even smell."

Brag upon one defect, and betray another.

Fable 75.—THE LIONESS.

There was a great stir made among all the Beasts, which could boast of the largest family. So they came to the Lioness. "And how many," said they, "do you have at a birth?" "One," said she, grimly; "but that one is a Lion."

Quality comes before quantity.



FABLE 76.—THE BUNDLE OF STICKS.

A HUSBANDMAN who had a quarrelsome family, after having tried in vain to reconcile them by words, thought he might more readily prevail by an example. So he called his sons and bade them lay a bundle of sticks before him. Then having tied them into a faggot, he told the lads, one after the other, to take it up and break it. They all tried, but tried in vain. Then untying the faggot, he gave them the sticks to break one by one. This they did with the greatest ease. Then said the father, "Thus you, my sons, as long as you remain united, are a match for all your enemies; but differ and separate, and you are undone."

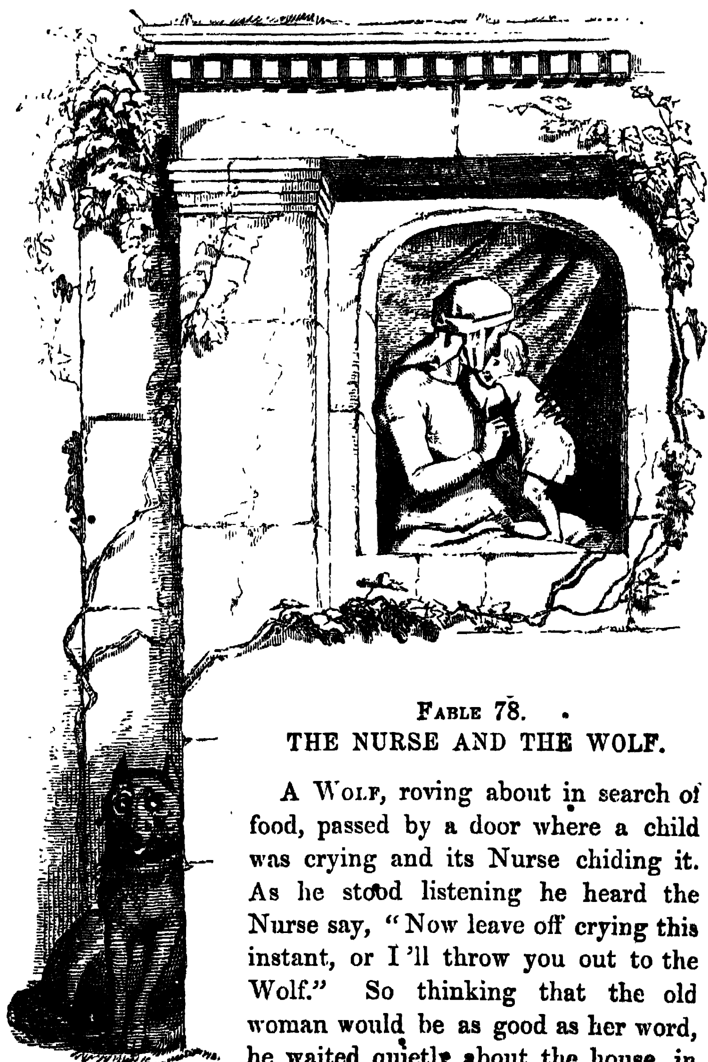
Union is strength.



FABLE 77.—THE MAN AND THE LION.

ONCE upon a time a Man and a Lion were journeying together, and came at length to high words which was the braver and stronger creature of the two. As the dispute waxed warmer they happened to pass by, on the road-side, a statue of a man strangling a lion. "See there," said the Man; "what more undeniable proof can you have of our superiority than that?" "That," said the Lion, "is your version of the story; let us be the sculptors, and for one lion under the feet of a man, you shall have twenty men under the paw of a lion."

Men are but sorry witnesses in their own cause.



FABLE 78.

THE NURSE AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF, roving about in search of food, passed by a door where a child was crying and its Nurse chiding it. As he stood listening he heard the Nurse say, "Now leave off crying this instant, or I'll throw you out to the Wolf." So thinking that the old woman would be as good as her word, he waited quietly about the house, in expectation of a capital supper. But as it grew dark and the

child became quiet, he again heard the Nurse, who was now fondling the child, say, "There's a good dear then; if the naughty Wolf comes for my child, we'll beat him to death, we will." The Wolf, disappointed and mortified, thought it was now high time to be going home, and, hungry as a wolf indeed, muttered as he went along: "This comes of heeding people who say one thing and mean another!"

Fable 79.—THE MONKEY AND THE DOLPHIN.

It was an old custom among sailors to carry about with them little Maltese lap-dogs, or Monkeys, to amuse them on the voyage; so it happened once upon a time that a man took with him a Monkey as a companion on board ship. While they were off Sunium, the famous promontory of Attica, the ship was caught in a violent storm, and being capsized, all on board were thrown in the water, and had to swim for land as best they could. And among them was the Monkey. A Dolphin saw him struggling, and, taking him for a man, went to his assistance and bore him on his back straight for shore. When they had just got opposite Piræus, the harbour of Athens, the Dolphin asked the Monkey if he were an Athenian? "Yes," answered the Monkey, "assuredly, and of one of the first families in the place." "Then, of course, you know Piræus," said the Dolphin. "Oh, yes," said the Monkey, who thought it was the name of some distinguished citizen, "he is one of my most intimate friends." Indignant at so gross a deceit and falsehood, the Dolphin dived to the bottom, and left the lying Monkey to his fate.



FABLE 80.—THE HORSE AND THE STAG.

A HORSE had the whole range of a meadow to himself; but a Stag coming and damaging the pasture, the Horse, anxious to have his revenge, asked a Man if he could not assist him in punishing the Stag. "Yes," said the Man, "only let me put a bit in your mouth, and get upon your back, and I will find the weapons." The Horse agreed, and the Man mounted accordingly; but instead of getting his revenge, the Horse has been from that time forward the slave of Man.

Revenge is too dearly purchased at the price of liberty.

FABLE 81.—THE WOLF AND THE SHEEP.

A WOLF that had been bitten by a dog, and was in a very sad case, being unable to move, called to a Sheep, that was passing by, and begged her to fetch him some water from the neighbouring stream; "For if you," said he, "will bring me drink, I will find meat myself." "Yes," said the Sheep, "I make no doubt of it; for, if I come near enough to give you the drink, you will soon make mince-meat of *me*."

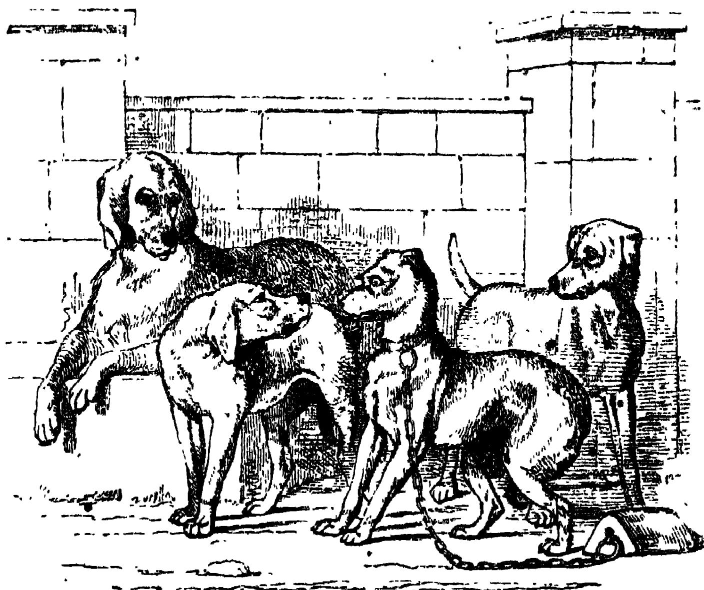
FABLE 82.—THE WIDOW AND THE SHEEP.

THERE was a certain Widow who had an only Sheep; and, wishing to make the most of his wool, she sheared him so closely that she cut his skin as well as his fleece. The Sheep, smarting under this treatment, cried out—"Why do you torture me thus? What will my blood add to the weight of the wool? If you want my flesh, Dame, send for the Butcher, who will put me out of my misery at once; but if you want my fleece, send for the Shearer, who will clip my wool without drawing my blood."

Middle measures are often but middling measures.

FABLE 83.—THE DOG AND HIS MASTER.

A CERTAIN Man was setting out on a journey, when, seeing his Dog standing at the door, he cried out to him, "What are you gaping about? Get ready to come with me." The Dog, wagging his tail, said, "I am all right, Master: it is you who have to pack up."



FABLE 84.—THE MISCHIEVOUS DOG.

THERE was a Dog so wild and mischievous, that his master was obliged to fasten a heavy clog about his neck, to prevent him biting and worrying his neighbours. The Dog, priding himself upon his badge, paraded in the market-place, shaking his clog to attract attention. But a sly friend whispered to him, "The less noise you make, the better; your mark of distinction is no reward of merit, but a badge of disgrace!"

Men often mistake notoriety for fame, and would rather be remarked for their vices or follies than not be noticed at all.

Fable 85.—THE BIRDCATCHER AND THE LARK.

A Birdcatcher was setting springes upon a common, when a Lark, who saw him at work, asked him from a distance what he was doing. "I am establishing a colony," said he, "and laying the foundations of my first city." Upon that, the Man retired to a little distance and hid himself. The Lark, believing his assertion, soon flew down to the place, and swallowing the bait, found himself entangled in the noose; whereupon the Birdcatcher straightway coming up to him, made him his prisoner. "A pretty fellow are you!" said the Lark; "if these are the colonies you found, you will not find many emigrants."

Fable 86.—THE SWALLOW AND THE RAVEN.

The Swallow and the Raven contended which was the finer bird. The Raven ended by saying, "Your beauty is but for the summer, but mine will stand many winters."

Durability is better than show.

Fable 87.—THE FARTHING RUSHLIGHT.

A Rushlight that had grown fat and saucy with too much grease, boasted one evening before a large company, that it shone brighter than the sun, the moon, and all the stars. At that moment, a puff of wind came and blew it out. One who lighted it again said, "Shine on, friend Rushlight, and hold your tongue; the lights of heaven are never blown out."



FABLE 88.—THE HERDSMAN AND THE LOST BULL.

A HERDSMAN, who had lost a Bull, went roaming through the forest in search of it. Being unable to find it, he began to vow to all the Nymphs of the forest and the mountain, to Mercury and to Pan, that he would offer up a lamb to them, if he could only discover the thief. At that moment, gaining a high ridge of ground, he sees a Lion standing over the carcase of his beautiful Bull. And now the unhappy man

vows the Bull into the bargain, if he may only escape from the thief's clutches.

Were our ill-judged prayers to be always granted, how many would be ruined at their own request!

Fable 89.—THE MAN BITTEN BY A DOG.

A Man who had been bitten by a Dog, was going about asking who could cure him. One that met him said, "Sir, if you would be cured, take a bit of bread and dip it in the blood of the wound, and give it to the dog that bit you." The Man smiled, and said, "If I were to follow your advice, I should be bitten by all the dogs in the city."

He who proclaims himself ready to buy up his enemies will never want a supply of them.

Fable 90.—THE TRAVELLERS AND THE PLANE-TREE.

Some Travellers, on a hot day in summer, oppressed with the noontide sun, perceiving a Plane-tree near at hand, made straight for it, and throwing themselves on the ground rested under its shade. Looking up, as they lay, towards the tree, they said one to another, "What a useless tree to man is this barren Plane!" But the Plane-tree answered them,—"Ungrateful creatures! at the very moment that you are enjoying benefit from me, you rail at me as being good for nothing."

Ingratitude is as blind as it is base.



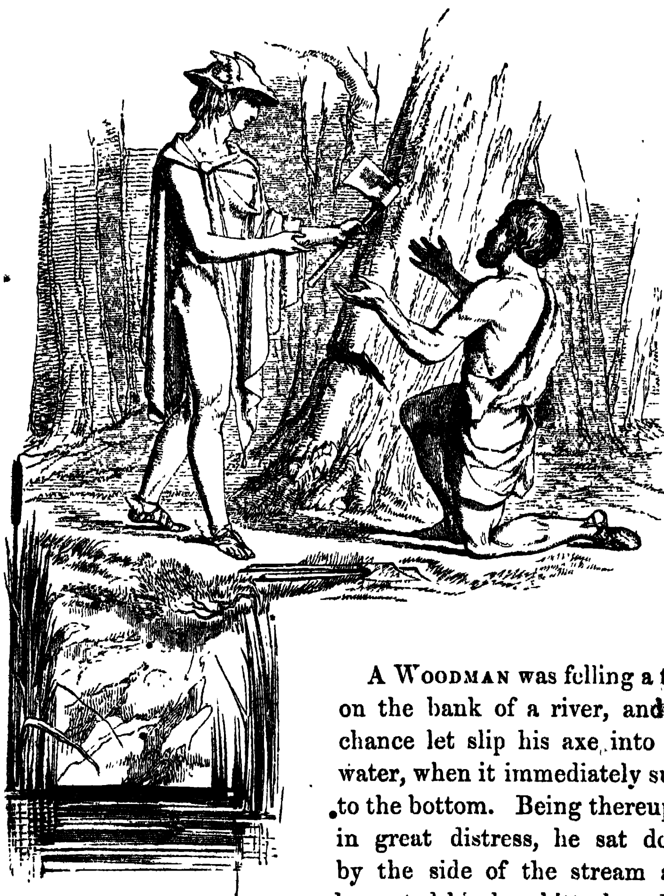
Fable 91.—THE OAK AND THE REED.

An Oak that had been rooted up by the winds was borne down the stream of a river, on the banks of which many Reeds were growing. The Oak wondered to see that things so slight and frail had stood the storm, when so great and strong a tree as himself had been rooted up. "Cease to wonder," said the Reed, "you were overthrown by fighting against the storm, while we are saved by yielding and bending to the slightest breath that blows."

Fable 92.—THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

A Viper entering into a smith's shop began looking about for something to eat. At length, seeing a File, he went up to it, and commenced biting at it; but the File bade him leave him alone, saying, "You are likely to get little from me, whose business it is to bite others."

Fable 93.—MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.



A Woodman was felling a tree on the bank of a river, and by chance let slip his axe into the water, when it immediately sunk to the bottom. Being thereupon in great distress, he sat down by the side of the stream and lamented his loss bitterly. But Mercury, whose river it was, taking compassion on him, appeared at the instant before him; and hearing from him the cause of his sorrow, dived to the bottom of the river, and bringing up a golden axe, asked the Woodman if that were

his. Upon the man's denying it, Mercury dived a second time, and brought up one of silver. Again the man denied that it was his. So diving a third time, he produced the identical axe which the man had lost. "That is mine!" said the Woodman, delighted to have recovered his own; and so pleased was Mercury with the fellow's truth and honesty, that he at once made him a present of the other two.

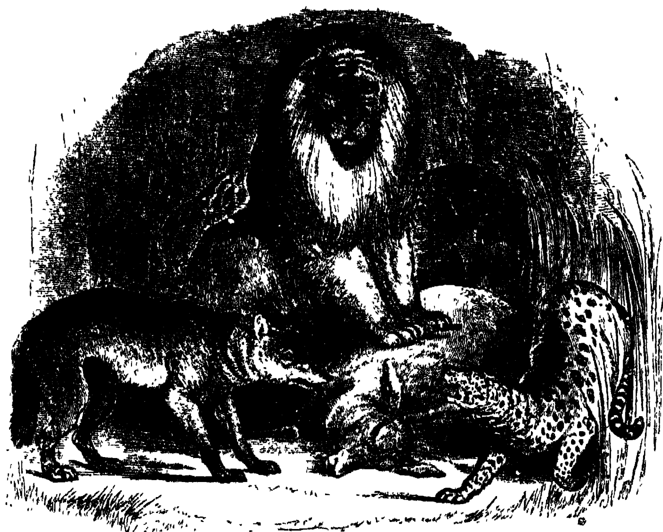
The man goes to his companions, and giving them an account of what had happened to him, one of them determined to try whether he might not have the like good fortune. So repairing to the same place, as if for the purpose of cutting wood, he let slip his axe on purpose into the river, and then sat down on the bank, and made a great show of weeping. Mercury appeared as before, and hearing from him that his tears were caused by the loss of his axe, dived once more into the stream; and bringing up a golden axe, asked him if that was the axe he had lost. "Aye, surely," said the man, eagerly; and he was about to grasp the treasure, when Mercury, to punish his impudence and lying, not only refused to give him that, but would not so much as restore him his own axe again.

Honesty is the best policy.

Fable 94.—THE GEESE AND THE CRANES.

Some Geese and some Cranes fed together in the same field. One day the sportsmen came suddenly down upon them. The Cranes being light of body, flew off in a moment and escaped; but the Geese, weighed down by their fat, were all taken.

In civil commotions, they fare best who have least to fetter them.

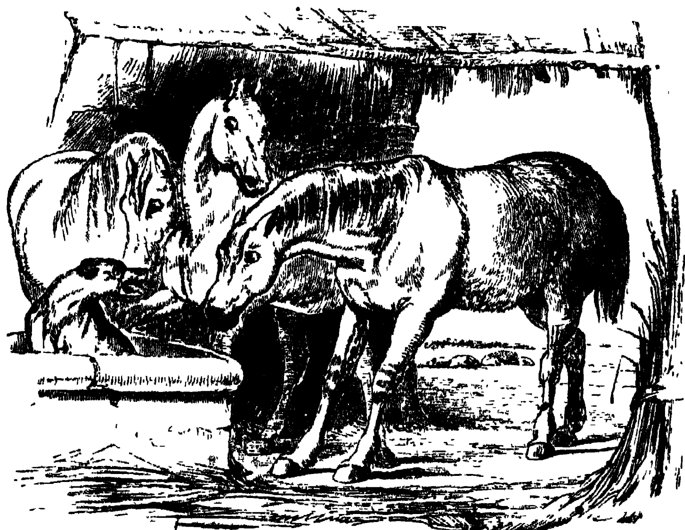


FABLE 95.—THE LION AND OTHER BEASTS HUNTING.

THE Lion and other beasts formed an alliance to go out a-hunting. When they had taken a fat stag, the Lion proposed himself as commissioner, and dividing it into three parts, thus proceeded: "The first," said he, "I shall take officially, as king; the second I shall take for my own personal share in the chase; and as for the third part,—let him take it who dares."

FABLE 96.—THE EAGLE AND THE ARROW.

A BOWMAN took aim at an Eagle and hit him in the heart. As the Eagle turned his head in the agonies of death, he saw that the Arrow was winged with his own feathers. "How much sharper," said he, "are the wounds made by weapons which we ourselves have supplied!"



Fable 97.—THE DOG IN THE MANGER.

A Dog made his bed in a Manger, and lay snarling and growling to keep the horses from their provender. "See," said one of them, "what a miserable cur! who neither can eat corn himself, nor will allow those to eat it who can."

Fable 98.—THE GNAT AND THE BULL.

A Gnat that had been buzzing about the head of a Bull, at length settling himself down upon his horn, begged his pardon for incommoding him; "but if," says he, "my weight at all inconveniences you, pray say so and I will be off in a moment." "Oh, never trouble your head about that," says the Bull, "for 'tis all one to me whether you go or stay; and, to say the truth, I did not know you were there."

The smaller the Mind the greater the Conceit.

Fable 99.—JUPITER, NEPTUNE, MINERVA, AND MOMUS.

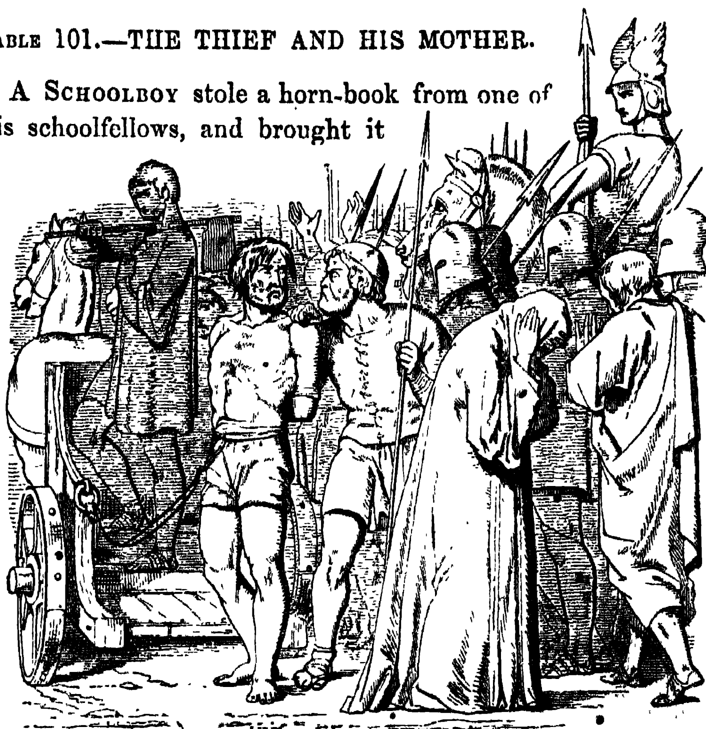
Jupiter, Neptune, and Minerva (as the story goes) once contended which of them should make the most perfect thing. Jupiter made a Man; Pallas made a House; and Neptune made a Bull; and Momus—for he had not yet been turned out of Olympus—was chosen judge to decide which production had the greatest merit. He began by finding fault with the Bull, because his horns were not below his eyes, so that he might see when he butted with them. Next he found fault with the Man, because there was no window in his breast that all might see his inward thoughts and feelings. And lastly he found fault with the House, because it had no wheels to enable its inhabitants to remove from bad neighbours. But Jupiter forthwith drove the critic out of heaven, telling him that a fault-finder could never be pleased, and that it was time to criticise the works of others when he had done some good thing himself.

Fable 100.—THE MARRIAGE OF THE SUN.

Once upon a time, in a very warm summer, it was currently reported that the Sun was going to be married. All the birds and the beasts were delighted at the thought; and the Frogs, above all others, were determined to have a good holiday. But an old Toad put a stop to their festivities by observing that it was an occasion for sorrow rather than for joy. "For if," said he, "the Sun of himself now parches up the marshes so that we can hardly bear it, what will become of us if he should have half a dozen little Suns in addition?"

Fable 101.—THE THIEF AND HIS MOTHER.

A Schoolboy stole a horn-book from one of his schoolfellows, and brought it



home to his mother. Instead of chastising him, she rather encouraged him in the deed. In course of time the boy, now grown into a man, began to steal things of greater value, till at length being caught in the very act, he was bound and led to execution. Perceiving his mother following among the crowd, wailing and beating her breast, he begged the officers to be allowed to speak one word in her ear. When she quickly drew near and applied her ear to her son's mouth, he seized the lobe of it tightly between his teeth and bit it off. Upon this she cried out lustily, and the crowd joined her in upbraiding the unnatural son, as if

his former evil ways had not been enough, but that his last act must be a deed of impiety against his mother. But he replied: "It is she who is the cause of my ruin; for if when I stole my schoolfellow's horn-book and brought it to her, she had given me a sound flogging, I should never have so grown in wickedness as to come to this untimely end."

Nip evil in the bud. Spare the rod and spoil the child.

Fable 102.—The Cat and the Mice.

A Cat, grown feeble with age, and no longer able to hunt the Mice as she was wont to do, bethought herself how she might entice them within reach of her paw. Thinking that she might pass herself off for a bag, or for a dead cat at least, she suspended herself by the hind legs from a peg, in the hope that the Mice would no longer be afraid to come near her. An old Mouse, who was wise enough to keep his distance, whispered to a friend, "Many a bag have I seen in my day, but never one with a cat's head." "Hang there, good Madam," said the other, "as long as you please, but I would not trust myself within reach of you though you were stuffed with straw."



Old birds are not to be caught with chaff.

Fable 103.—THE LION AND HIS THREE COUNCILLORS.

The Lion called the Sheep to ask her if his breath smelt: she said Ay; he bit off her head for a fool. He called the Wolf, and asked him: he said No; he tore him in pieces for a flatterer. At last he called the Fox, and asked him. Truly he had got a cold, and could not smell.

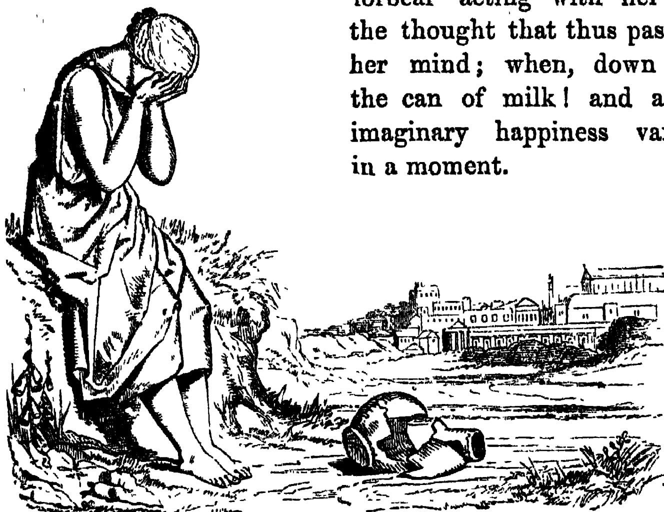
Wise men say nothing in dangerous times.

Fable 104.—THE COUNTRY MAID AND HER MILK-CAN.



A Country Maid was walking along with a can of Milk upon her head, when she fell into the following train of reflections. "The money for which I shall sell this milk will enable me to increase my stock of eggs to three hundred. These eggs, allowing for what may prove addle, and what may be destroyed by vermin, will produce at least two hundred and fifty chickens. The chickens will be fit to carry to market just at the time when poultry is always dear; so that by the new-year I cannot fail of having money enough to purchase a new gown. Green —let me consider—yes, green becomes my complexion best, and green it shall be. In this dress I will go to the fair, where all the young fellows will strive to have me for a partner; but no-

I shall refuse every one of them, and with a disdainful toss turn from them." Transported with this idea, she could not forbear acting with her head the thought that thus passed in her mind; when, down came the can of milk! and all her imaginary happiness vanished in a moment.



FABLE 105.—THE BEEVES AND THE BUTCHERS.

THE Beeves, once on a time, determined to make an end of the Butchers, whose whole art, they said, was conceived for their destruction. So they assembled together, and had already whetted their horns for the contest, when a very old Ox, who had long worked at the plough, thus addressed them.—"Have a care, my friends, what you do. These men, at least, kill us with decency and skill, but if we fall into the hands of botchers instead of butchers, we shall suffer a double death; for be well assured, men will not go without beef, even though they were without butchers."

Better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of.



Fable 106.—THE TWO POTS.

Two Pots, one of earthenware, the other of brass, were carried down a river in a flood. The Brazen Pot begged his companion to keep by his side, and he would protect him, "Thank you for your offer," said the Earthen Pot, "but that is just what I am afraid of; if you will only keep at a distance, I may float down in safety; but should we come in contact, I am sure to be the sufferer."

Avoid too powerful neighbours; for, should there be a collision, the weakest goes to the wall.

Fable 107.—THE DOCTOR AND HIS PATIENT.

A Doctor had been for some time attending upon a sick Man, who, however, died under his hands. At the funeral the Doctor went about among the relations, saying, "Our poor friend there, if he had only refrained from wine, and attended to his inside, and used proper means, would not have been lying there." One of the mourners answered him, "My good sir, it is of no use your saying this now; you ought to have prescribed these things when your patient was alive to take them."

The best advice may come too late.

Fable 108.—THE MICE IN COUNCIL.

Once upon a time the Mice being sadly distressed by the persecution of the Cat, resolved to call a meeting, to decide upon the best means of getting rid of this continual annoyance. Many plans were discussed and rejected; at last a young Mouse got up and proposed that a Bell should be hung round the Cat's neck, that they might for the future always have notice of her coming, and so be able to escape. This proposition was hailed with the greatest applause, and was agreed to at once unanimously. Upon which an old Mouse, who had sat silent all the while, got up and said that he considered the contrivance most ingenious, and that it would, no doubt, be quite successful; but he had only one short question to put, namely which of them it was who would Bell the Cat?

It is one thing to propose, another to execute.

Fable 109.—THE LION AND THE GOAT.

On a summer's day, when everything was suffering from extreme heat, a Lion and a Goat came at the same time to quench their thirst at a small fountain. They at once fell to quarrelling which should first drink of the water, till at length it seemed that each was determined to resist the other even to death. But, ceasing from the strife for a moment, to recover breath, they saw a flock of vultures hovering over them, only waiting to pounce upon whichever of them should fall. Whereupon they instantly made up their quarrel, agreeing that it was far better for them both to become friends, than to furnish food for the crows and vultures.



FABLE 110.—THE GOOSE WITH THE GOLDEN EGGS.

A CERTAIN man had the good fortune to possess a Goose that laid him a Golden Egg every day. But dissatisfied with so slow an income, and thinking to seize the whole treasure at once, he killed the Goose; and cutting her open, found her—just what any other goose would be!

Much wants more and loses all.

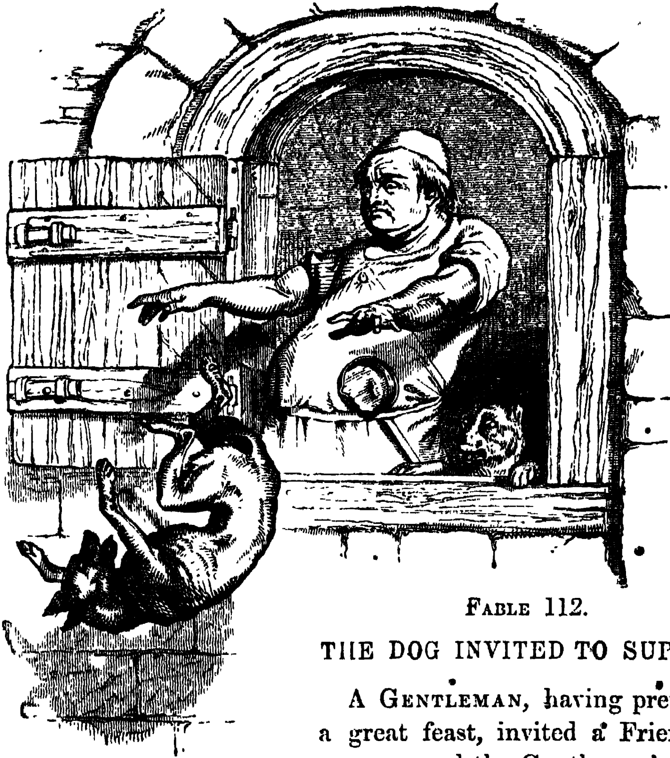
FABLE 111.—THE MOUNTEBANK AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

A CERTAIN wealthy patrician, intending to treat the Roman people with some theatrical entertainment, publicly offered a reward to any one who would produce a novel spectacle. Incited by emulation, artists arrived from all parts to contest the prize, among whom a well-known witty

Mountebank gave out that he had a new kind of entertainment that had never yet been produced on any stage. This report being spread abroad, brought the whole city together. The theatre could hardly contain the number of spectators. And when the artist appeared alone upon the stage, without any apparatus, or any assistants, curiosity and suspense kept the spectators in profound silence. On a sudden he thrust down his head into his bosom, and mimicked the squeaking of a young pig, so naturally, that the audience insisted upon it that he had one under his cloak, and ordered him to be searched; which being done, and nothing appearing, they loaded him with the most extravagant applause.

A Countryman among the audience observing what passed —"Oh!" says he, "I can do better than this;" and immediately gave out that he would perform the next day. Accordingly, on the morrow, a yet greater crowd was collected. Prepossessed, however, in favour of the Mountebank, they came rather to laugh at the Countryman than to pass a fair judgment on him. They both came out upon the stage. The Mountebank grunts away first, and calls forth the greatest clapping and applause. Then the Countryman, pretending that he concealed a little pig under his garments (and he had, in fact, really got one) pinched its ear till he made it squeak. The people cried out that the Mountebank had imitated the pig much more naturally, and hooted to the Countryman to quit the stage; but he, to convict them to their face, produced the real pig from his bosom. "And now, gentlemen, you may see," said he, "what a pretty sort of judges you are!"

It is easier to convince a man against his senses than against his will.



FABLE 112.

THE DOG INVITED TO SUPPER.

A GENTLEMAN, having prepared a great feast, invited a Friend to supper; and the Gentleman's Dog, meeting the Friend's Dog, "Come," said he, "my good fellow, and sup with us to-night." The Dog was delighted with the invitation, and as he stood by and saw the preparations for the feast, said to himself, "Capital fare indeed! this is, in truth, good luck. I shall revel in dainties, and I will take good care to lay in an ample stock to-night, for I may have nothing to eat to-morrow." As he said this to himself, he wagged his tail, and gave a sly look at his friend who had invited him. But his tail wagging to and fro caught the cook's eye, who seeing a stranger, straightway seized him by the legs, and threw him out of window. When he reached the ground, he set off yelping

down the street; upon which the neighbours' Dogs ran up to him, and asked him how he liked his supper. "I'faith," said he, with a sorry smile, "I hardly know, for we drank so deep that I can't even tell you which way I got out of the house."

They who enter by the back-stairs may expect to be shown out at the window.

Fable 113.—THE GOATHERD AND THE GOATS.

It was a stormy day, and the snow was falling fast, when a Goatherd drove his Goats, all white with snow, into a desert cave for shelter. There he found that a herd of Wild-goats, more numerous and larger than his own, had already taken possession. So thinking to secure them all, he left his own Goats to take care of themselves, and threw the branches which he had brought for them to the Wild-goats to browse on. But when the weather cleared up, he found his own Goats had perished from hunger, while the Wild-goats were off and away to the hills and woods. So the Goatherd returned a laughing-stock to his neighbours, having failed to gain the Wild-goats, and having lost his own.

They who neglect their old friends for the sake of new, are rightly served if they lose both.

Fable 114.—THE FISHERMAN.

A Fisherman went to a river to fish; and when he had laid his nets across the stream, he tied a stone to a long cord, and beat the water on either side of the net, to drive the fish into the meshes. One of the neighbours that lived thereabout seeing him thus employed, went up to him and blamed him exceedingly for disturbing the water, and making it so muddy as to be unfit to drink. "I am sorry," said the Fisherman, "that this does not please you, but it is by thus troubling the waters that I gain my living."



Fable 115.—THE FROGS ASKING FOR A KING.

In the days of old, when the Frogs were all at liberty in the lakes, and had grown quite weary of following every one his own devices, they assembled one day together, and with no little clamour petitioned Jupiter to let them have a King to keep them in better order, and make them lead honester lives. Jupiter knowing the vanity of their hearts,



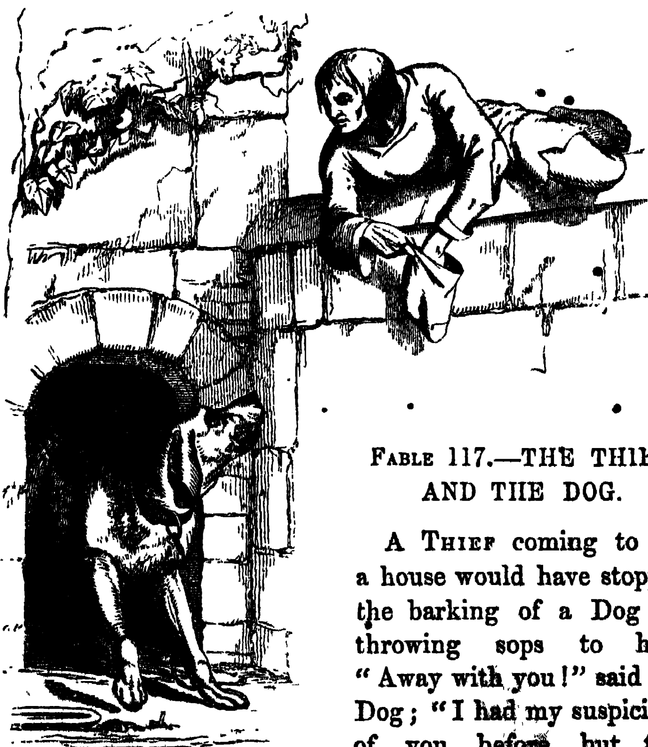
smiled at their request, and threw down a Log into the Lake, which by the splash and commotion it made, sent the whole commonwealth into the greatest terror and amazement. They rushed under the water and into the mud, and dared not come within ten leaps' length of the spot where it lay. At length one Frog bolder than the rest ventured to pop his head above the water, and take a survey of their new King at a respectful distance. Presently, when they perceived the Log lie stock-still, others began to swim up to it and around it; till by degrees, growing bolder and bolder, they at last leaped upon it, and treated it with the greatest contempt. Dissatisfied with so tame a ruler, they forthwith petitioned Jupiter a second time for another and more active King. Upon which he sent them a Stork, who no sooner arrived among them than he began laying hold of them and devouring them one by one as fast as he could, and it was in vain that they endeavoured to escape him. Then they sent Mercury with a private message to Jupiter, beseeching him that he would take pity on them once more; but Jupiter replied, that they were only suffering the punishment due to their folly, and that another time they would learn to let well alone, and not be dissatisfied with their natural condition.

Fable 116.—THE ASS AND HIS MASTERS.

An Ass, that belonged to a Gardener, and had little to eat and much to do, besought Jupiter to release him from the Gardener's service, and give him another master. Jupiter, angry at his discontent, made him over to a Potter. He had now heavier burdens to carry than before, and again appealed to Jupiter to relieve him, who accordingly contrived that he should be sold to a Tanner. The Ass having now fallen into worse hands than ever, and daily observing how his master

was employed, exclaimed with a groan, "Alas, wretch that I am! it had been better for me to have remained content with my former masters, for now I see that my present owner not only works me harder while living, but will not even spare my hide when I am dead!"

He that is discontented in one place will seldom be happy in another.



Fable 117.—THE THIEF AND THE DOG.

A Thief coming to rob a house would have stopped the barking of a Dog by throwing sops to him. "Away with you!" said the Dog; "I had my suspicions of you before, but this excess of civility assures me that you are a rogue."

A bribe in hand betrays mischief at heart.

Fable 118.—JUPITER AND THE BEE.

In days of yore, when the world was young, a Bee that had stored her combs with a bountiful harvest, flew up to heaven to present as a sacrifice an offering of honey. Jupiter was so delighted with the gift, that he promised to give her whatsoever she should ask for. She therefore besought him, saying, "O glorious Jove, maker and master of me, poor Bee, give thy servant a sting, that when any one approaches my hive to take the honey, I may kill him on the spot." Jupiter, out of love to man, was angry at her request, and thus answered her: "Your prayer shall not be granted in the way you wish, but the sting which you ask for you shall have; and when any one comes to take away your honey and you attack him, the wound shall be fatal not to him but to you, for your life shall go with your sting."

He that prays harm for his neighbour, begs a curse upon himself.

Fable 119.—THE HUNTER AND THE FISHERMAN.

A Hunter was returning from the mountains loaded with game, and a Fisherman was at the same time coming home with his creel full of fish, when they chanced to meet by the way. The Hunter took a fancy to a dish of fish: the Fisher preferred a supper of game. So each gave to the other the contents of his own basket. And thus they continued daily to exchange provisions, till one who had observed them said: "Now, by this invariable interchange, will they destroy the zest of their meal; and each will soon wish to return to his own store again."



FABLE 120.—THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

THERE was a brood of Young Larks in a field of corn, which was just ripe, and the mother, looking every day for the reapers, left word, whenever she went out in search of food, that her young ones should report to her all the news they heard. One day, while she was absent, the master came to look at the state of the crop. "It is full time," said he, "to call in all my neighbours, and get my corn reaped." When the old Lark came home, the young ones told their mother what they had heard, and begged her to remove them forthwith. "Time enough," said she; "if he trusts to his neighbours, he will have to wait awhile yet for his harvest." Next day, however, the owner came again, and finding the sun still hotter and the corn more ripe, and nothing done,

"There is not a moment to be lost," said he; "we cannot depend upon our neighbours: we must call in our relations;" and, turning to his son, "Go call your uncles and cousins, and see that they begin to-morrow." In still greater fear, the young ones repeated to their mother the farmer's words. "If that be all," says she, "do not be frightened, for the relations have got harvest work of their own; but take particular notice what you hear the next time, and be sure you let me know." She went abroad the next day, and the owner coming as before, and finding the grain falling to the ground from over-ripeness, and still no one at work, called to his son. "We must wait for our neighbours and friends no longer; do you go and hire some reapers to-night, and we will set to work ourselves to-morrow." When the young ones told their mother this—"Then," said she, "it is time to be off, indeed; for when a man takes up his business himself, instead of leaving it to others, you may be sure that he means to set to work in earnest."

Fable 121.—THE LION AND THE DOLPHIN.

A Lion was roaming on the sea-shore, when, seeing a Dolphin basking on the surface of the water, he invited him to form an alliance with him, "for," said he, "as I am the king of the beasts, and you are the king of the fishes, we ought to be the greatest friends and allies possible." The Dolphin gladly assented; and the Lion, not long after, having a fight with a wild bull, called upon the Dolphin for his promised support. But when he, though ready to assist him, found himself unable to come out of the sea for the purpose, the Lion accused him of having betrayed him. "Do not blame me," said the Dolphin in reply, "but blame

my nature, which however powerful at sea, is altogether helpless on land."

In choosing allies we must look to their power as well as their will to aid us.



FABLE 122.—THE TRUMPETER TAKEN PRISONER.

A TRUMPETER being taken prisoner in a battle, begged hard for quarter. "Spare me, good sirs, I beseech you," said he, "and put me not to death without cause, for I have killed no one myself, nor have I any arms but this trumpet only." "For that very reason," said they who had seized him, "shall you the sooner die, for without the spirit to fight yourself, you stir up others to warfare and bloodshed."

He who incites to strife is worse than he who takes part in it.

Fable 123.—THE BEES, THE DRONES, AND THE WASP.

Some Bees had built their comb in the hollow trunk of an oak. The Drones asserted that it was their doing, and belonged to them. The cause was brought into court before Judge Wasp. Knowing something of the parties, he thus addressed them:—"The plaintiffs and defendants are so much alike in shape and colour as to render the ownership a doubtful matter, and the case has very properly been brought before me. The ends of justice, and the object of the court, will best be furthered by the plan which I propose. Let each party take a hive to itself, and build up a new comb, that from the shape of the cells and the taste of the honey, the lawful proprietors of the property in dispute may appear." The Bees readily assented to the Wasp's plan. The Drones declined it. Whereupon the Wasp gave judgment:—"It is clear now who made the comb, and who cannot make it; the Court adjudges the honey to the Bees."

Fable 124.—THE LION AND ASS HUNTING.

A Lion and an Ass made an agreement to go out hunting together. By-and-bye they came to a cave, where many wild goats abode. The Lion took up his station at the mouth of the cave, and the Ass, going within, kicked and brayed and made a mighty fuss to frighten them out. When the Lion had caught very many of them, the Ass came out and asked him if he had not made a noble fight, and routed the goats properly. "Yes, indeed," said the Lion; "and I assure you, you would have frightened me too, if I had not known you to be an Ass."

When braggarts are admitted into the company of their betters, it is only to be made use of and be laughed at.



FABLE 125.—THE BIRDS, THE BEASTS, AND THE BAT.

ONCE upon a time there was a fierce war waged between the Birds and the Beasts. For a long while the issue of the battle was uncertain, and the Bat, taking advantage of his ambiguous nature, kept aloof and remained neutral. At length when the Beasts seemed to prevail, the Bat joined their forces and appeared active in the fight; but a rally being made by the Birds, which proved successful, he was found at

the end of the day among the ranks of the winning party. A peace being speedily concluded, the Bat's conduct was condemned alike by both parties, and being acknowledged by neither, and so excluded from the terms of the truce, he was obliged to skulk off as best he could, and has ever since lived in holes and corners, never daring to show his face except in the duskiness of twilight.

Fable 126.—THE FOX AND THE HEDGEHOG.

A Fox, while crossing over a river, was driven by the stream into a narrow gorge, and lay there for a long time unable to get out, covered with myriads of horse-flies that had fastened themselves upon him. A Hedgehog, who was wandering in that direction, saw him, and taking compassion on him, asked him if he should drive away the flies that were so tormenting him. But the Fox begged him to do nothing of the sort. "Why not?" asked the Hedgehog. "Because," replied the Fox, "these flies that are upon me now are already full, and draw but little blood, but should you remove them, a swarm of fresh and hungry ones will come, who will not leave a drop of blood in my body."

When we throw off rulers or dependants, who have already made the most of us, we do but, for the most part, lay ourselves open to others who will make us bleed yet more freely.

Fable 127.—THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERD.

A Wolf had long hung about a flock of sheep, and had done them no harm. The Shepherd, however, had his suspicions, and for a while was always on the look-out against him as an avowed enemy. But when the Wolf continued for

a long time following in the train of his flock without the least attempt to annoy them, he began to look upon him more as a friend than a foe; and having one day occasion to go into the city, he intrusted the sheep to his care. The Wolf no sooner saw his opportunity than he forthwith fell upon the sheep and worried them; and the Shepherd, on his return, seeing his flock destroyed, exclaimed, "Fool that I am! yet I deserved no less for trusting my Sheep with a Wolf!"

There is more danger from a pretended friend than from an open enemy.



FABLE 128.—THE TRAVELLERS AND THE HATCHET.

Two men were travelling along the same road, when one of them picking up a hatchet cries, "See what I have found!" "Do not say *I*," says the other, "but WE have found." After a while, up came the men who had lost the hatchet, and

charged the man who had it with the theft. "Alas," says he to his companion, "we are undone!" "Do not say WE," replies the other, "but *I* am undone; for he that will not allow his friend to share the prize, must not expect him to share the danger."

FABLE 129.—THE MICE AND THE WEASELS.

THE Mice and the Weasels had long been at war with each other, and the Mice being always worsted in battle, at length agreed at a meeting, solemnly called for the occasion, that their defeat was attributable to nothing but their want of discipline, and they determined accordingly to elect regular Commanders for the time to come. So they chose those whose valour and prowess most recommended them to the important post. The new Commanders, proud of their position, and desirous of being as conspicuous as possible, bound horns upon their foreheads as a sort of crest and mark of distinction. Not long after a battle ensued. The Mice, as before, were soon put to flight; the common herd escaped into their holes; but the Commanders, not being able to get in from the length of their horns, were every one caught and devoured.

There is no distinction without its accompanying danger.

FABLE 130.—THE BOY AND THE NETTLE.

A BOY playing in the fields got stung by a Nettle. He ran home to his mother, telling her that he had but touched that nasty weed, and it had stung him. "It was your just touching it, my boy," said the mother, "that caused it to sting you; the next time you meddle with a Nettle, grasp it tightly, and it will do you no hurt."

Do boldly what you do at all.

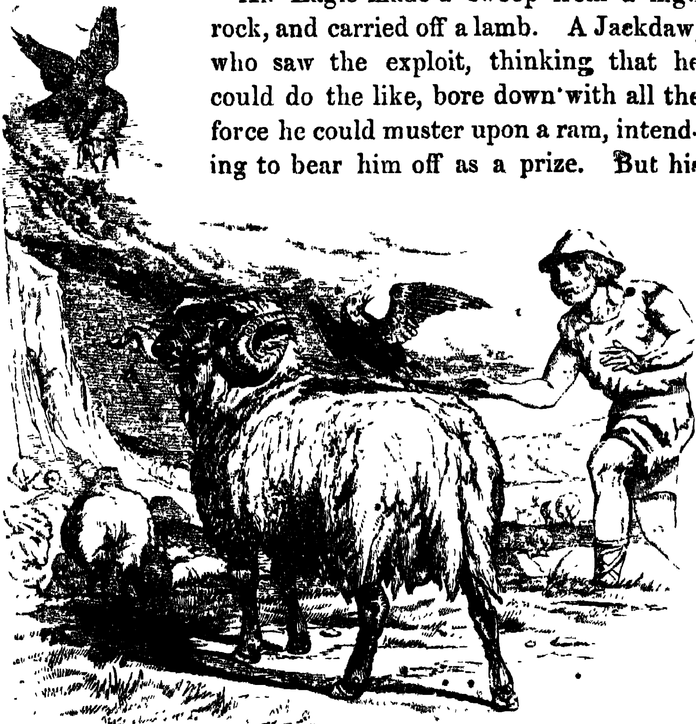
Fable 131.—THE SICK KITE.

A Kite, who had been long very ill, said to his mother, "Don't cry, mother; but go and pray to the gods that I may recover from this dreadful disease and pain." "Alas! child," said the mother, "which of the gods can I entreat for one who has robbed all their altars?"

A death-bed repentance is poor amends for the errors of a life-time.

Fable 132.—THE EAGLE AND THE JACKDAW.

An Eagle made a swoop from a high rock, and carried off a lamb. A Jackdaw, who saw the exploit, thinking that he could do the like, bore down with all the force he could muster upon a ram, intending to bear him off as a prize. But his



claws becoming entangled in the wool, he made such a fluttering in his efforts to escape, that the shepherd, seeing through the whole matter, came up and caught him, and having clipped his wings, carried him home to his children at nightfall. "What bird is this, father, that you have brought us?" exclaimed the children. "Why," said he, "if you ask himself, he will tell you that he is an Eagle; but if you will take my word for it, I know him to be but a Jackdaw."

FABLE 133.—THE ASS AND HIS DRIVER.



An Ass that was being driven along the road by his Master, started on ahead, and, leaving the beaten track, made as fast as he could for the edge of a precipice. When he was just on the point of falling over, his ran up, and seizing him by the tail, endeavoured to

pull him back; but the Ass resisting and pulling the contrary way, the man let go his hold, saying, "Well, Jack, if you will be master, I cannot help it. A wilful beast must go his own way."



FABLE 134.—THE OLD MAN AND DEATH.

AN Old Man that had travelled a long way with a huge bundle of sticks, found himself so weary that he cast it down, and called upon Death to deliver him from his most miserable existence. Death came straightway at his call, and asked him what he wanted. "Pray, good sir," says he, "do me but the favour to help me up with my burden again."

It is one thing to call for Death, and another to see him coming.

FABLE 135.—THE FALCONER AND THE PARTRIDGE.

A FALCONER having taken a Partridge in his net, the bird cried out sorrowfully, "Let me go, good Master Falconer, and I promise you I will decoy other Partridges into your net." "No," said the man, "whatever I might have done, I am determined now not to spare you; for there is no death too bad for him who is ready to betray his friends."

FABLE 136.—THE ASS, THE FOX, AND THE LION.

AN Ass and a Fox having made a compact alliance, went out into the fields to hunt. They met a Lion on the way. The Fox seeing the impending danger, made up to the Lion, and whispered that he would betray the Ass into his power, if he would promise to bear him harmless. The Lion having agreed to do so, the Fox contrived to lead the Ass into a snare. The Lion no sooner saw the Ass secured, than he fell at once upon the Fox, reserving the other for his next meal.

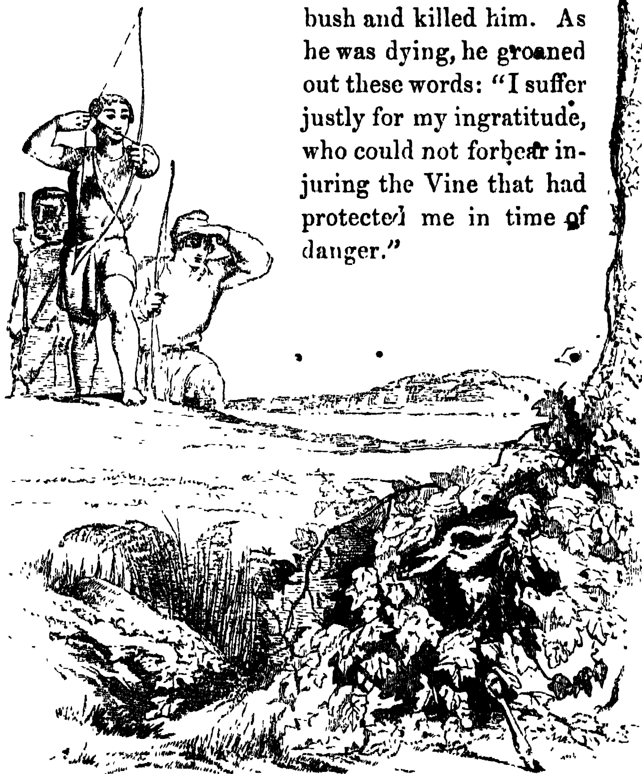
FABLE 137.—THE FIR-TREE AND THE BRAMBLE

A FIR-TREE was one day boasting itself to a Bramble. "You are of no use at all; but how could barns and houses be built without me?" "Good sir," said the Bramble, "when the woodmen come here with their axes and saws, what would you give to be a Bramble and not a Fir?"

A humble lot in security is better than the dangers that encompass the high and haughty.

Fable 138.—THE HART AND THE VINE.

A Hart pursued by hunters concealed himself among the branches of a Vine. The hunters passed by without discovering him, and when he thought that all was safe, he began browsing upon the leaves that had concealed him. But one of the hunters, attracted by the rustling, turned round, and guessing that their prey was there, shot into the bush and killed him. As he was dying, he groaned out these words: "I suffer justly for my ingratitude, who could not forbear injuring the Vine that had protected me in time of danger."

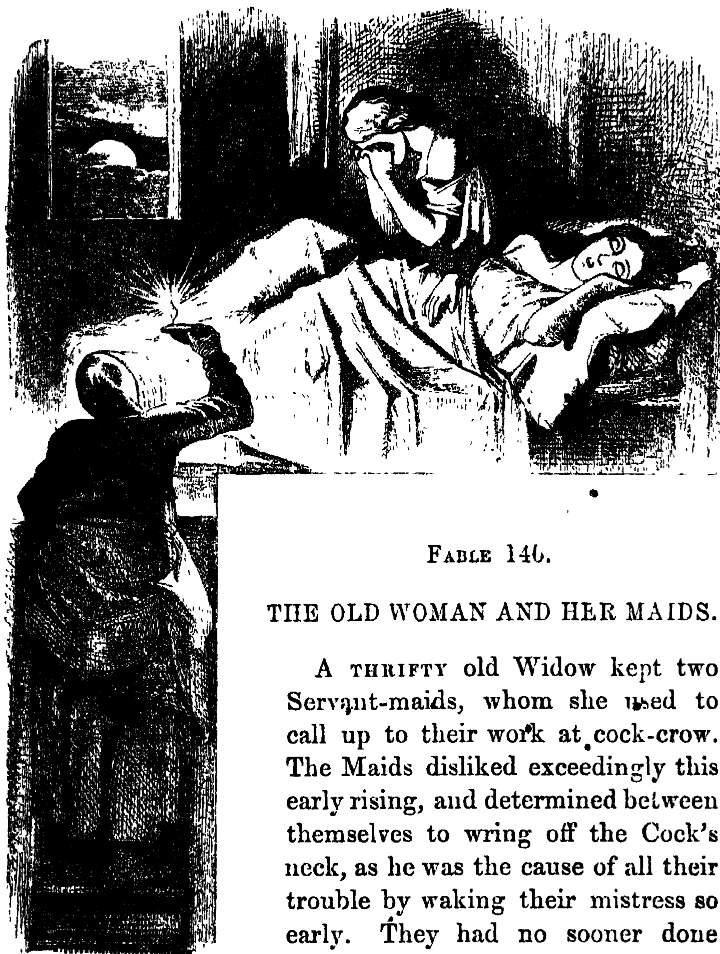




FABLE 139.—THE MISER.

A MISER, to make sure of his property, sold all that he had and converted it into a great lump of gold, which he hid in a hole in the ground, and went continually to visit and inspect it. This roused the curiosity of one of his workmen, who, suspecting that there was a treasure, when his master's back was turned, went to the spot, and stole it away. When the Miser returned and found the place empty, he wept and tore his hair. But a neighbour who saw him in this extravagant grief, and learned the cause of it, said, "Fret thyself no longer, but take a stone and put it in the same place, and think that it is your lump of gold; for, as you never meant to use it, the one will do you as much good as the other."

The worth of money is not in its possession, but in its use.

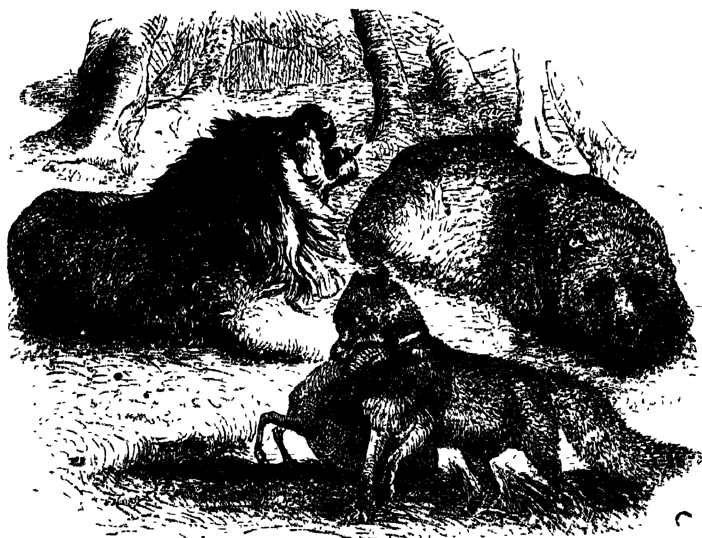


FABLE 146.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

A THRIFTY old Widow kept two Servant-maids, whom she used to call up to their work at cock-crow. The Maids disliked exceedingly this early rising, and determined between themselves to wring off the Cock's neck, as he was the cause of all their trouble by waking their mistress so early. They had no sooner done this, than the old lady missing her usual alarum, and afraid of over-sleeping herself, continually mistook the time of day, and roused them up at midnight.

Too much cunning overreaches itself.



FABLE 141.—THE LION, THE BEAR, AND THE FOX.

A LION and a Bear found the carcase of a Fawn, and had a long fight for it. The contest was so hard and even, that, at last, both of them, half-blinded and half-dead, lay panting on the ground, without strength to touch the prize that was stretched between them. A Fox coming by at the time, and seeing their helpless condition, stepped in between the combatants and carried off the booty. "Poor creatures that we are," cried they, "who have been exhausting all our strength and injuring one another, merely to give a rogue a dinner!"

Fable 142.—THE FARMER AND THE CRANES.

Some Cranes settled down in a Farmer's field that was newly sown. For some time the Farmer frightened them away by brandishing an empty sling at them. But when the Cranes found that he was only slinging to the winds, they no longer minded him, nor flew away. Upon this the Farmer slung at them with stones, and killed a great part of them. "Let us be off," said the rest, "to the land of the Pygmies, for this man means to threaten us no longer, but is determined to get rid of us in earnest."

Fable 143.—THE SICK LION.

A Lion, no longer able, from the weakness of old age, to hunt for his prey, laid himself up in his den, and, breathing with great difficulty, and speaking with a low voice, gave out that he was very ill indeed. The report soon spread among the beasts, and there was great lamentation for the sick Lion. One after the other came to see him; but, catching them thus alone, and in his own den, the Lion made an easy prey of them, and grew fat upon his diet. The Fox, suspecting the truth of the matter, came at length to make his visit of inquiry, and standing at some distance, asked his Majesty how he did? "Ah, my dearest friend," said the Lion, "is it you? Why do you stand so far from me? Come, sweet friend, and pour a word of consolation in the poor Lion's ear, who has but a short time to live." "Bless you!" said the Fox, "but excuse me if I cannot stay; for, to tell the truth, I feel quite uneasy at the mark of the footsteps that I see here, all pointing towards your den, and none returning outwards."

Affairs are easier of entrance than of exit; and it is but common prudence to see our way out before we venture in.



FABLE 144.—THE BOASTING TRAVELLER.

A MAN who had been travelling in foreign parts, on his return home was always bragging and boasting of the great feats he had accomplished in different places. In Rhodes, for instance, he said he had taken such an extraordinary leap, that no man could come near him, and he had witnesses there to prove it. "Possibly," said one of his hearers; "but if this be true, just suppose this to be Rhodes, and then try the leap again."

FABLE 145.—THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A WOLF, once upon a time, resolved to disguise himself, thinking that he should thus gain an easier livelihood.

Having, therefore, clothed himself in a sheep's skin, he contrived to get among a flock of Sheep, and feed along with them, so that even the Shepherd was deceived by the imposture. When night came on and the fold was closed, the Wolf was shut up with the Sheep, and the door made fast. But the Shepherd, wanting something for his supper, and going in to fetch out a sheep, mistook the Wolf for one of them, and killed him on the spot.

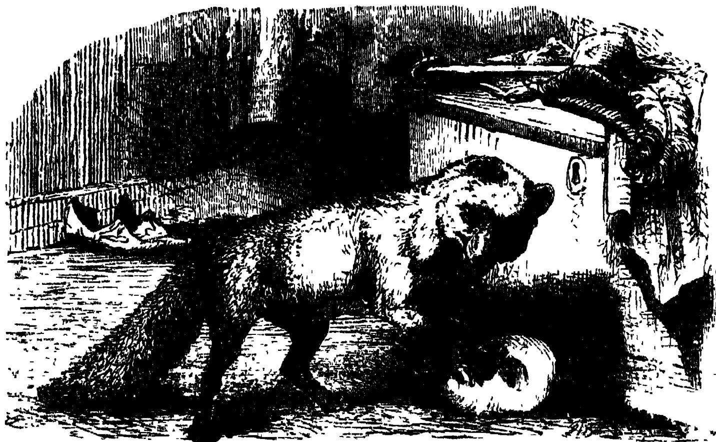
Fable 146.—THE WOLF AND THE HORSE.

As a Wolf was roaming over a farm, he came to a field of oats, but not being able to eat them, he left them and went his way. Presently meeting with a Horse, he bade him come with him into the field; "For," says he, "I have found some capital oats; and I have not tasted one, but have kept them all for you, for the very sound of your teeth is music to my ear." But the Horse replied: "A pretty fellow! if Wolves were able to eat oats, I suspect you would not have preferred your ears to your appetite."

Little thanks are due to him who only gives away what is of no use to himself.

Fable 147.—THE BOY AND THE FILBERTS.

A certain Boy put his hand into a pitcher where great plenty of Figs and Filberts were deposited; he grasped as many as his fist could possibly hold, but when he endeavoured to pull it out, the narrowness of the neck prevented him. Unwilling to lose any of them, but unable to draw out his hand, he burst into tears, and bitterly bemoaned his hard fortune. An honest fellow who stood by, gave him this wise and reasonable advice:—"Grasp only half the quantity, my boy, and you will easily succeed."



Fable 148.—THE FOX AND THE MASK.

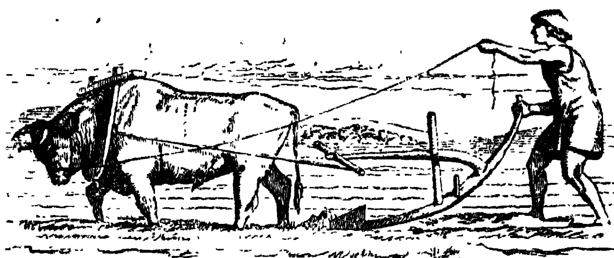
A Fox had stolen into the house of an actor, and in rummaging among his various properties, laid hold of a highly-finished Mask. "A fine-looking head, indeed!" cried he; "what a pity it is that it wants brains!"

A fair outside is but a poor substitute for inward worth.

Fable 149.—THE RAVEN AND THE SWAN.

A Raven envied a Swan the whiteness of her plumage; and, thinking that its beauty was owing to the water in which she lived, he deserted the altars where he used to find his livelihood, and betook himself to the pools and streams. There he plumed and dressed himself and washed his coat, but all to no purpose, for his plumage remained as black as ever, and he himself soon perished for want of his usual food.

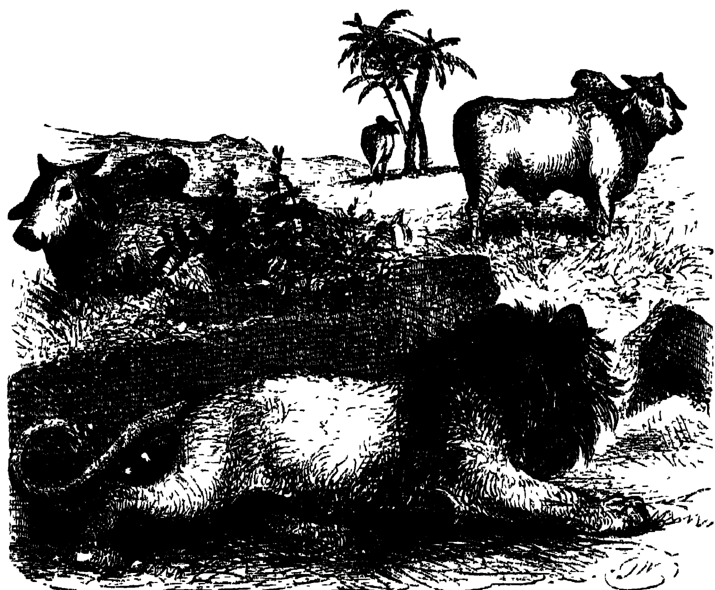
Change of scene is not change of nature.



Fable 150.—THE HEIFER AND THE OX.

A Heifer that ran wild in the fields, and had never felt the yoke, upbraided an Ox at plough for submitting to such labour and drudgery. The Ox said nothing, but went on with his work. Not long after, there was a great festival. The Ox got his holiday: but the Heifer was led off to be sacrificed at the altar. "If this be the end of your idleness," said the Ox, "I think that my work is better than your play. I had rather my neck felt the yoke than the axe."





Fable 151.—THE LION AND THE BULLS.

Three Bulls fed in a field together in the greatest peace and amity. A Lion had long watched them in the hope of making prize of them, but found that there was little chance for him so long as they kept all together. He therefore began secretly to spread evil and slanderous reports of one against the other, till he had fomented a jealousy and distrust amongst them. No sooner did the Lion see that they avoided one another, and fed each by himself apart, than he fell upon them singly, and so made an easy prey of them all.

The quarrels of friends are the opportunities of foes.

Fable 152.—THE THIRSTY PIGEON.

A Pigeon severely pressed by thirst, seeing a glass of water painted upon a sign, supposed it to be real; so dashing down at it with all her might, she struck against the board, and, breaking her wing, fell helpless to the ground, where she was quickly captured by one of the passers-by.

Great haste is not always good speed.

Fable 153.—THE GOAT AND THE GOATHERD.

A Goat had strayed from the herd, and the Goatherd was trying all he could to bring him back to his companions. When by calling and whistling he could make no impression on him, at last, taking up a stone, he struck the Goat on the horn and broke it. Alarmed at what he had done, he besought the Goat not to tell his master; but he replied, "O most foolish of Goatherds! my horn will tell the story, though I should not utter a word."

Facts speak plainer than words.

Fable 154.—THE HOUND AND THE HARE.

A Hound after long chasing a Hare at length came up to her, and kept first biting and then licking her. The Hare, not knowing what to make of him, said: "If you are a friend, why do you bite me?—but if a foe, why caress me?"

A doubtful friend is worse than a certain enemy: let a man be one thing or the other, and we then know how to meet him.



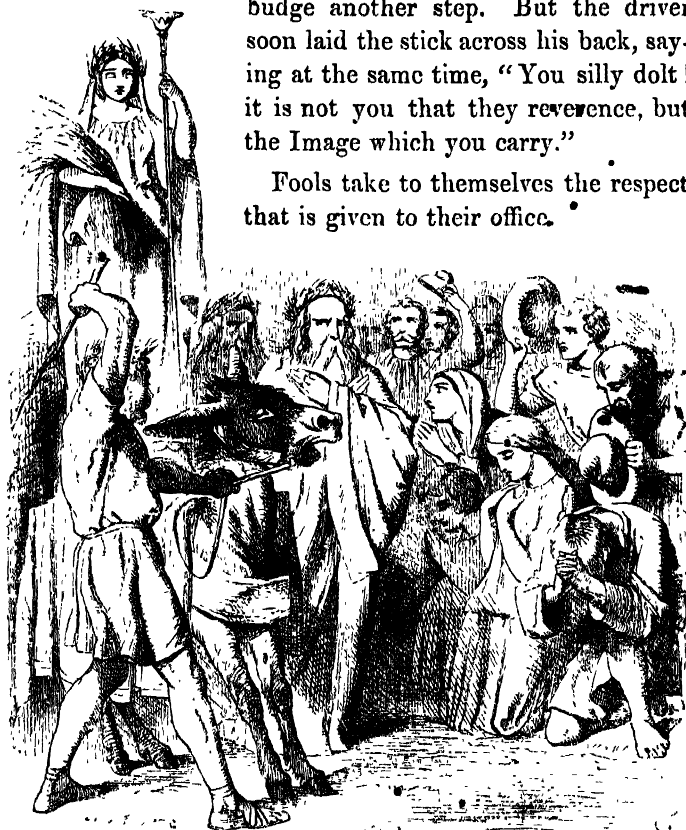
FABLE 155.—THE ARAB AND THE CAMEL.

An Arab having loaded his Camel, asked him whether he preferred to go up hill or down hill. "Pray, Master," said the Camel dryly, "is the straight way across the plain shut up?"

FABLE 156.—THE JACKASS IN OFFICE.

AN Ass carrying an Image in a religious procession, was driven through a town, and all the people who passed by made a low reverence. Upon this the Ass, supposing that they intended this worship for himself, was mightily puffed up, and would not budge another step. But the driver soon laid the stick across his back, saying at the same time, "You silly dolt! it is not you that they reverence, but the Image which you carry."

Fools take to themselves the respect that is given to their office.





Fable 157.—THE FOX AND THE STORK.

A Fox one day invited a Stork to dinner, and being disposed to divert himself at the expense of his guest, provided nothing for the entertainment but some thin soup in a shallow dish. This the Fox lapped up very readily, while the Stork, unable to gain a mouthful with her long narrow bill, was as hungry at the end of dinner as when she began. The Fox meanwhile professed his regret at seeing her eat so sparingly, and feared that the dish was not seasoned to her mind. The Stork said little, but begged that the Fox would do her the honour of returning her visit; and accordingly he agreed to dine with her on the following day. He arrived true to his appointment, and the dinner was ordered forthwith; but when it was served up, he found to his dismay that it was contained in a narrow-necked vessel, down which the Stork readily thrust her long neck and bill, while he was

obliged to content himself with licking the neck of the jar. Unable to satisfy his hunger, he retired with as good a grace as he could, observing that he could hardly find fault with his entertainer, who had only paid him back in his own coin.



FABLE 158.—THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.

An Ass having put on a Lion's skin, roamed about, frightening all the silly animals he met with, and, seeing a Fox, he tried to alarm him also. But Reynard, having heard his voice, said, "Well, to be sure! and I should have been frightened too, if I had not heard you bray."

They who assume a character that does not belong to them generally betray themselves by overacting it.

Fable 159.—THE BALD KNIGHT.

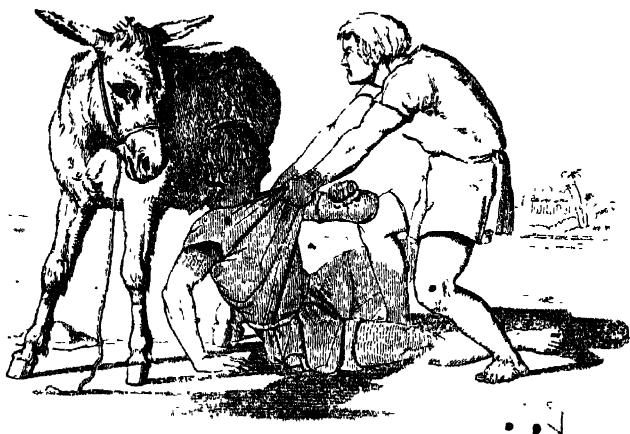
A certain Knight growing old, his hair fell off, and he became bald; to hide which imperfection, he wore a periwig. But as he was riding out with some others a-hunting, a sudden gust of wind blew off the periwig, and exposed his bald pate. The company could not forbear laughing at the accident; and he himself laughed as loud as anybody, saying, "How was it to be expected that I should keep strange hair upon my head, when my own would not stay there?"

Fable 160.—THE PORKER AND THE SHEEP.

A young Porker took up his quarters in a fold of Sheep. One day the shepherd laid hold on him, when he squeaked and struggled with all his might and main. The Sheep reproached him for crying out, and said, "The master often lays hold of us, and we do not cry. "Yes," replied he, "but our case is not the same; for he catches you for the sake of your wool, but me for my fry."

Fable 161.—THE HEDGE AND THE VINEYARD.

A foolish young Heir who had just come into possession of his wise father's estate, caused all the Hedges about his Vineyard to be grubbed up, because they bore no grapes. The throwing down of the fences laid his grounds open to man and beast, and all his vines were presently destroyed. So the simple fellow learnt, when it was too late, that he ought not to expect to gather grapes from brambles, and that it was quite as important to protect his Vineyard as to possess it.



FABLE 162.—THE ASS'S SHADOW.

A YOUTH, one hot summer's day, hired an Ass to carry him from Athens to Megara. At mid-day the heat of the sun was so scorching, that he dismounted, and would have sat down to repose himself under the shadow of the Ass. But the driver of the Ass disputed the place with him, declaring that he had an equal right to it with the other. "What!" said the Youth, "did I not hire the Ass for the whole journey?" "Yes," said the other, "you hired the Ass, but not the Ass's Shadow." While they were thus wrangling and fighting for the place, the Ass took to his heels and ran away.

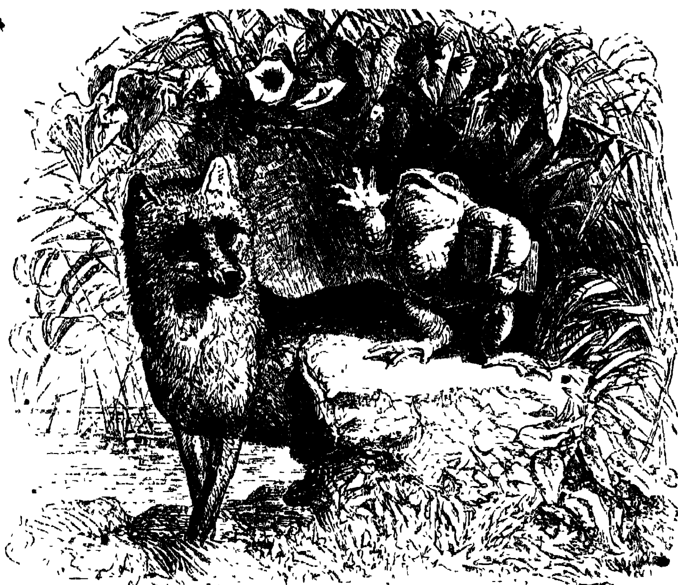




FABLE 163.—THE BULL AND THE GOAT.

A BULL being pursued by a Lion, fled into a cave where a wild Goat had taken up his abode. The Goat upon this began molesting him, and butting at him with his horns. "Don't suppose," said the Bull, "if I suffer this now, that it is you I am afraid of. Let the Lion be once out of sight, and I will soon show you the difference between a Bull and a Goat."

Mean people take advantage of their neighbours' difficulties to annoy them; but the time will come when they will repent them of their insolence.



FABLE 164.—THE QUACK FROG.

A FROG emerging from the mud of a swamp, proclaimed to all the world that he was come to cure all diseases. "Here!" he cried, "come and see a doctor, the proprietor of medicines such as man never heard of before; no, not Æsculapius himself, Jove's court-physician!" "And how," said the Fox, "dare you set up to heal others, who are not able to cure your own limping gait, and blotched and wrinkled skin?"

Test a man's profession by his practice. Physician, heal thyself.

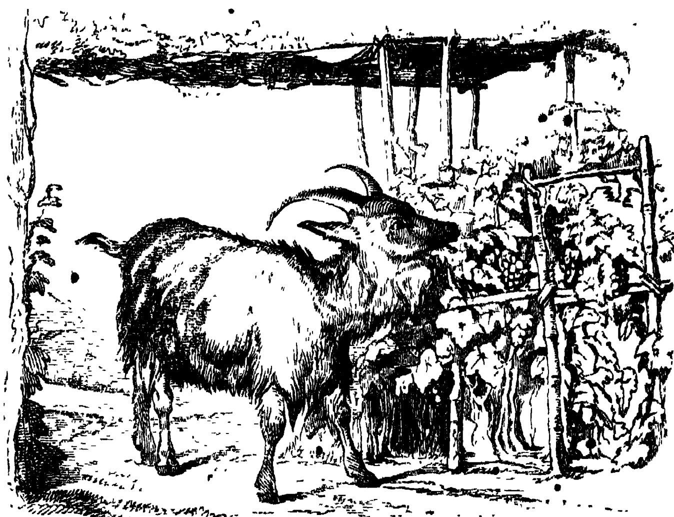


FABLE 165.—THE HORSE AND THE LOADED ASS.

A MAN who kept a Horse and an Ass was wont in his journeys to spare the Horse, and put all the burden upon the Ass's back. The Ass, who had been some while ailing, besought the Horse one day to relieve him of part of his load; "For if," said he, "you would take a fair portion, I shall soon get well again; but if you refuse to help me, this weight will kill me." The Horse, however, bade the Ass get on, and not trouble him with his complaints. The Ass jogged on in silence, but presently, overcome with the weight of his burden, dropped down dead, as he had foretold. Upon this, the master coming up, unloosed the load from the dead Ass, and, putting it upon the Horse's back, made him carry the

Ass's carcase in addition. "Alas, for my ill nature!" said the Horse; "by refusing to bear my just portion of the load, I have now to carry the whole of it, with a dead weight into the bargain."

A disobliging temper carries its own punishment along with it.



FABLE 166.—THE VINE AND THE GOAT.

THERE was a Vine teeming with ripe fruit and tender shoots, when a wanton Goat came up and gnawed the bark, and browsed upon the young leaves. "I will revenge myself on you," said the Vine, "for this insult; for when in a few days you are brought as a victim to the altar, the juice of my grapes shall be the dew of death upon thy forehead."

Retribution, though late, comes at last.



Fable 167.—THE MAN AND HIS TWO WIVES.

In days when a man was allowed more wives than one, a middle-aged bachelor, who could be called neither young nor old, and whose hair was only just beginning to turn grey, must needs fall in love with two women at once, and marry them both. The one was young and blooming, and wished her husband to appear as youthful as herself; the other was somewhat more advanced in age, and was as anxious that her husband should appear a suitable match for her. So, while the young one seized every opportunity of pulling out the good man's grey hairs, the old one was as industrious in plucking out every black hair she could find. For a while the man was highly gratified by their attention and devotion,

till he found one morning that, between the one and the other, he had not a hair left.

He that submits his principles to the influence and caprices of opposite parties, will end in having no principles at all.

Fable 168.—THE ASS CARRYING SALT.

A certain Huckster who kept an Ass, hearing that Salt was to be had cheap at the sea-side, drove down his Ass thither to buy some. Having loaded the beast as much as he could bear, he was driving him home, when, as they were passing a slippery ledge of rock, the Ass fell into the stream below, and the Salt being melted, the Ass was relieved of his burden, and having gained the bank with ease, pursued his journey onward, light in body and in spirit. The Huckster soon afterwards set off for the sea-shore for some more Salt, and loaded the Ass, if possible, yet more heavily than before. On their return, as they crossed the stream into which he had formerly fallen, the Ass fell down on purpose, and by the dissolving of the Salt, was again released from his load. The Master, provoked at the loss, and thinking how he might cure him of this trick, on his next journey to the coast freighted the beast with a load of sponges. When they arrived at the same stream as before, the Ass was at his old tricks again, and rolled himself into the water; but the sponges becoming thoroughly wet, he found to his cost, as he proceeded homewards, that instead of lightening his burden, he had more than doubled its weight.

The same measures will not suit all circumstances; and we may play the same trick once too often.





Fable 169.

THE STAG AT THE POOL.

A Stag one summer's day came to a pool to quench his thirst, and as he stood drinking he saw his form reflected in the water. "What beauty and strength," said he, "are in these horns of mine; but how unseemly are these weak and slender



feet!" While he was thus criticising, after his own fancies, the form which Nature had given him, the huntsmen and hounds drew that way. The feet, with which he had found so much fault, soon carried him out of the reach of his pursuers; but the horns, of which he was so vain, becoming entangled in a thicket, held him till the hunters again came up to him, and proved the cause of his death.

Look to use before ornament.

FABLE 170.

THE ASTRONOMER.



AN Astronomer used to walk out every night to gaze upon the stars. It happened one night that, as he was wandering in the outskirts of the city, with his whole thoughts rapt up in the skies, he fell into a well. On his holloaing and calling out, one who heard his cries ran up to him, and when he had listened to his story, said, "My good man, while you are trying to pry into the mysteries of heaven, you overlook the common objects that are under your feet."

FABLE 171.—THE SWALLOW IN CHANCERY.

A SWALLOW had built her nest under the eaves of a Court of Justice. Before her young ones could fly, a Serpent gliding out of his hole ate them all up. When the poor bird returned to her nest and found it empty, she began a pitiable wailing; but a neighbour suggesting, by way of comfort, that she was not the first bird who had lost her young, "True," she replied, "but it is not only my little ones that I mourn, but that I should have been wronged in that very place where the injured fly for justice."

FABLE 172.—THE BOYS AND THE FROGS.

A TROOP of Boys were playing at the edge of a pond, when perceiving a number of Frogs in the water, they began to pelt at them with stones. They had already killed many of the poor creatures, when one more hardy than the rest, putting his head above the water, cried out to them: "Stop your cruel sport, my lads; consider, what is Play to you is Death to us."

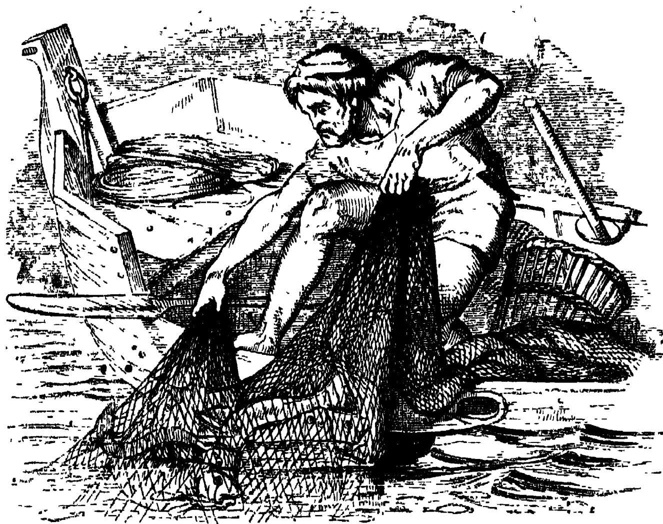
FABLE 173.—THE WOLF AND THE GOAT.

A WOLF seeing a Goat feeding on the brow of a high precipice where he could not come at her, besought her to come down lower, for fear she should miss her footing at that dizzy height; "and moreover," said he, "the grass is far sweeter and more abundant here below." But the Goat replied: "Excuse me; it is not for my dinner that you invite me, but for your own."



FABLE 174.—THE SHEPHERD AND THE SEA.

A SHEPHERD moved down his flock to feed near the shore, and beholding the Sea lying in a smooth and breathless calm, he was seized with a strong desire to sail over it. So he sold all his sheep and bought a cargo of Dates, and loaded a vessel, and set sail. He had not gone far when a storm arose; his ship was wrecked, and his Dates and everything lost, and he himself with difficulty escaped to land. Not long after, when the Sea was again calm, and one of his friends came up to him and was admiring its repose, he said, "Have a care, my good fellow, of that smooth surface; it is only looking out for your Dates."



FABLE 175.—THE GREAT AND THE LITTLE FISHES.

A FISHERMAN was drawing up a net which he had cast into the sea, full of all sorts of fish. The Little Fish escaped through the meshes of the net, and got back into the deep, but the Great Fish were all caught and hauled into the ship.

Our insignificance is often the cause of our safety.

FABLE 176.—THE FATHER AND HIS TWO DAUGHTERS.

A MAN who had two daughters married one to a Gardener, the other to a Potter. After awhile he paid a visit to the Gardener's, and asked his daughter how she was, and how it fared with her. "Excellently well," said she; "we have everything that we want; I have but one prayer, that we may have a heavy storm of rain to water our plants." Off

he set to the Potter's, and asked his other daughter how matters went with her. "There is not a thing we want," she replied; "and I only hope this fine weather and hot sun may continue, to bake our tiles." "Alack," said the Father, "if you wish for fine weather, and your sister for rain, which am I to pray for myself?"

Fable 177.—THE KID AND THE WOLF.

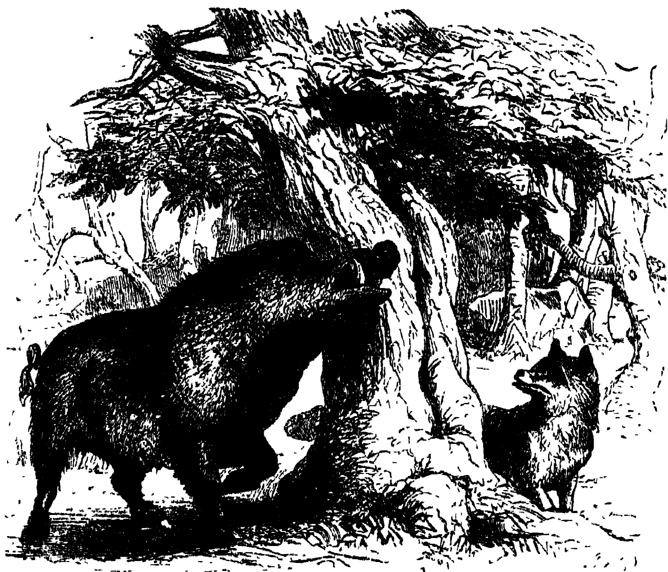
A Kid that had strayed from the herd was pursued by a Wolf. When she saw all other hope of escape cut off, she turned round to the wolf and said, "I must allow indeed that I am your victim, but as my life is now but short, let it be a merry one. Do you pipe for awhile, and I will dance." While the Wolf was piping and the Kid was dancing, the Dogs hearing the music ran up to see what was going on, and the Wolf was glad to take himself off as fast as his legs would carry him.

He who steps out of the way to play the fool, must not wonder if he misses the prize.

Fable 178.—THE RIVERS AND THE SEA.

Once upon a time the Rivers combined against the Sea, and, going in a body, accused her, saying: "Why is it that when we Rivers pour our waters into you so fresh and sweet, you straightway render them salt and unpalatable?" The Sea, observing the temper in which they came, merely answered: "If you do not wish to become salt, please to keep away from me altogether."

Those who are most benefited are often the first to complain.



Fable 179.—THE WILD BOAR AND THE FOX.

A Wild Boar was whetting his tusks against a tree, when a Fox coming by asked why he did so; "For," said he, "I see no reason for it; there is neither hunter nor hound in sight, nor any other danger that I can see, at hand." "True," replied the Boar; "but when that danger does arise, I shall have something else to do than to sharpen my weapons."

It is too late to whet the sword when the trumpet sounds to draw it.

Fable 180 —THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE SEA

A Husbandman seeing a ship full of sailors tossed about up and down upon the billows, cried out, "O Sea! deceitful and pitiless element, that destroyest all who venture upon

thee!" The Sea heard him, and assuming a woman's voice replied, "Do not reproach me; I am not the cause of this disturbance, but the Winds, that when they fall upon me will give no repose. But should you sail over me when they are away, you will say that I am milder and more tractable than your own mother earth."



FABLE 181.—THE BLACKAMOOR.

A CERTAIN man bought a Blackamoor, and thinking that the colour of his skin arose from the neglect of his former master, he no sooner brought him home than he procured all manner of scouring apparatus, scrubbing-brushes, soaps, and sand-paper, and set to work with his servants to wash him white again. They drenched and rubbed him for many an hour, but all in vain; his skin remained as black as ever; while the poor wretch all but died from the cold he caught under the operation.

No human means avail of themselves to change a nature originally evil.



FABLE 182.—THE ASS, THE COCK, AND THE LION.

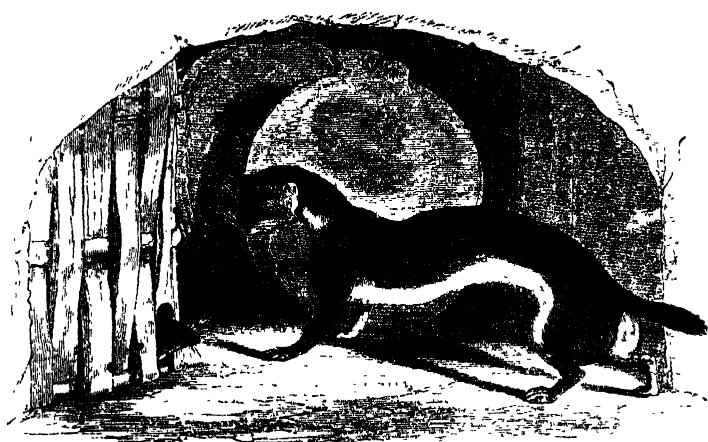
An Ass and a Cock lived in a farm-yard together. One day a hungry Lion passing by and seeing the Ass in good condition, resolved to make a meal of him. Now, they say that there is nothing a Lion hates so much as the crowing of a Cock; and at that moment the Cock happening to crow, the Lion straightway made off with all haste from the spot. The Ass, mightily amused to think that a Lion should be frightened at a bird, plucked up courage and gallopped after him, delighted with the notion of driving the king of beasts before him. He had, however, gone no great distance, when the Lion turned sharply round upon him, and made an end of him in a trice.

Presumption begins in ignorance and ends in ruin.



FABLE 183.—THE CHARGER AND THE ASS.

A CHARGER adorned with his fine trappings came thundering along the road, exciting the envy of a poor Ass who was trudging along the same way with a heavy load upon his back. "Get out of my road!" said the proud Horse, "or I shall trample you under my feet." The Ass said nothing, but quietly moved on one side to let the Horse pass. Not long afterwards the Charger was engaged in the wars, and being badly wounded in battle was rendered unfit for military service, and sent to work upon a farm. When the Ass saw him dragging with great labour a heavy waggon, he understood how little reason he had had to envy one who, by his overbearing spirit in the time of his prosperity, had lost those friends who might have succoured him in time of need.



FABLE 184.—THE MOUSE AND THE WEASEL.

A LITTLE starveling Mouse had made his way with some difficulty into a basket of corn, where, finding the entertainment so good, he stuffed and crammed himself to such an extent, that when he would have got out again, he found the hole was too small to allow his puffed-up body to pass. As he sat at the hole groaning over his fate, a Weasel, who was brought to the spot by his cries, thus addressed him:—"Stop there, my friend, and fast till you are thin; for you will never come out till you reduce yourself to the same condition as when you entered."

FABLE 185.—THE EAGLE AND THE BEETLE.

A HARE being pursued by an Eagle, betook himself for refuge to the nest of a Beetle, whom he entreated to save him. The Beetle therefore interceded with the Eagle,

begging of him not to kill the poor suppliant, and conjuring him, by mighty Jupiter, not to slight his intercession and break the laws of hospitality because he was so small an animal. But the Eagle, in wrath, gave the Beetle a flap with his wing, and straightway seized upon the Hare and devoured him. When the Eagle flew away, the Beetle flew after him, to learn where his nest was, and getting into it, he rolled the Eagle's eggs out of it one by one, and broke them. The Eagle, grieved and enraged to think that any one should attempt so audacious a thing, built his nest the next time in a higher place; but there too the Beetle got at it again, and served him in the same manner as before. Upon this the Eagle, being at a loss what to do, flew up to Jupiter, his Lord and King, and placed the third brood of eggs, as a sacred deposit, in his lap, begging him to guard them for him. But the Beetle, having made a little ball of dirt, flew up with it and dropped it in Jupiter's lap; who, rising up on a sudden to shake it off, and forgetting the eggs, threw them down, and they were again broken. Jupiter being informed by the Beetle that he had done this to be revenged upon the Eagle, who had not only wronged him, but had acted impiously towards Jove himself, told the Eagle, when he came to him, that the Beetle was the aggrieved party, and that he complained not without reason. But being unwilling that the race of Eagles should be diminished, he advised the Beetle to come to an accommodation with the Eagle. As the Beetle would not agree to this, Jupiter transferred the Eagle's breeding to another season, when there are no Beetles to be seen.

No one can slight the laws of hospitality with impunity; and there is no station or influence, however powerful, that can protect the oppressor, in the end, from the vengeance of the oppressed.



FABLE 186.—THE LEOPARD AND THE FOX.

A LEOPARD and a Fox had a contest which was the finer creature of the two. The Leopard put forward the beauty of its numberless spots; but the Fox replied—"It is better to have a versatile mind than a variegated body."

FABLE 187.—THE WOLF AND THE LION.

ONE day a Wolf had seized a sheep from a fold, and was carrying it home to his own den, when he met a Lion, who straightway laid hold of the sheep and bore it away. The Wolf, standing at a distance, cried out, that it was a great shame, and that the Lion had robbed him of his own. The Lion laughed, and said, "I suppose, then, that it was your good friend the shepherd who gave it to *you*."



Fable 188.—THE OLD LION.

A Lion worn out with years lay stretched upon the ground, utterly helpless, and drawing his last breath. A Boar came up, and to satisfy an ancient grudge, drove at him with his tusks. Next a Bull, determined to be revenged on an old enemy, gored him with his horns. Upon this an Ass, seeing that the old Lion could thus be treated with impunity, thought that he would show his spite also, and came and threw his heels in the Lion's face. Whereupon the dying beast exclaimed: "The insults of the powerful were bad enough, but those I could have managed to bear; but to be spurned by so base a creature as thou—the disgrace of nature, is to die a double death."



FABLE 189.—THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERDS.

A WOLF looking into a hut and seeing some shepherds comfortably regaling themselves on a joint of mutton—"A pretty row," said he, "would these men have made if they had caught me at such a supper!"

Men are too apt to condemn in others the very things that they practise themselves.

FABLE 190.—THE SEA-SIDE TRAVELLERS.

As some Travellers were making their way along the sea-shore, they came to a high cliff, and looking out upon the sea saw a Faggot floating at a distance, which they thought at first must be a large Ship; so they waited, expecting to

see it come into harbour. As the Faggot drifted nearer to the shore, they thought it no longer to be a Ship, but a Boat. But when it was at length thrown on the beach, they saw that it was nothing but a Faggot after all.

Dangers seem greatest at a distance; and coming events are magnified according to the interest or inclination of the beholder.

Fable 191.—The Dogs and the Hides.

Some hungry Dogs, seeing some raw Hides which a skinner had left in the bottom of a stream, and not being able to reach them, agreed among themselves to drink up the river to get at the prize. So they set to work, but they all burst themselves with drinking before ever they came near the Hides.

They who aim at an object by unreasonable means, are apt to ruin themselves in the attempt.

Fable 192.—The Ant and the Dove.

An Ant went to a fountain to quench his thirst, and tumbling in, was almost drowned. But a Dove that happened to be sitting on a neighbouring tree saw the Ant's danger, and plucking off a leaf, let it drop into the water before him, and the Ant mounting upon it, was presently wafted safe ashore. Just at that time a Fowler was spreading his net, and was in the act of ensnaring the Dove, when the Ant, perceiving his object, bit his heel. The start which the man gave made him drop his net, and the Dove, aroused to a sense of her danger, flew safe away.

One good turn deserves another.

FABLE 193.

THE FOX AND THE CROW.

A CROW had snatched a goodly piece of cheese out of a window, and flew with it into a high tree, intent on enjoying her prize. A Fox spied the dainty morsel, and thus he planned his approaches. "O Crow," said he, "how beautiful are thy wings, how bright thine eye! how graceful thy neck! thy breast is the breast of an eagle! thy claws—I beg pardon—thy talons, are a match for all the beasts of the field. O! that such a bird should be dumb, and want only a voice!" The Crow, pleased with the flattery, and chuckling to think how she would surprise the Fox with her caw, opened her mouth:—down dropped the cheese! which the



Fox snapping up, observed, as he walked away, "that whatever he had remarked of her beauty, he had said nothing yet of her brains."

Men seldom flatter without some private end in view; and they who listen to such music may expect to have to pay the piper.

Fable 194.—THE BRAZIER AND HIS DOG.

There was a certain Brazier who had a little Dog. While he hammered away at his metal, the Dog slept; but whenever he sat down to his dinner, the Dog woke up. "Sluggard cur!" said the Brazier, throwing him a bone; "you sleep through the noise of the anvil, but wake up at the first clatter of my teeth."

Men are awake enough to their own interests, who turn a deaf ear to their friend's distress.

Fable 195.—THE FARMER AND THE LION.

A Lion entered one day into a farm-yard, and the Farmer, wishing to catch him, shut the gate. When the Lion found that he could not get out, he began at once to attack the sheep, and then betook himself to the oxen. So the Farmer, afraid for himself, now opened the gate, and the Lion made off as fast as he could. His wife, who had observed it all, when she saw her husband in great trouble at the loss of his cattle, cried out—"You are rightly served; for what could have made you so mad as to wish to detain a creature, whom, if you saw at a distance, you would wish further off."

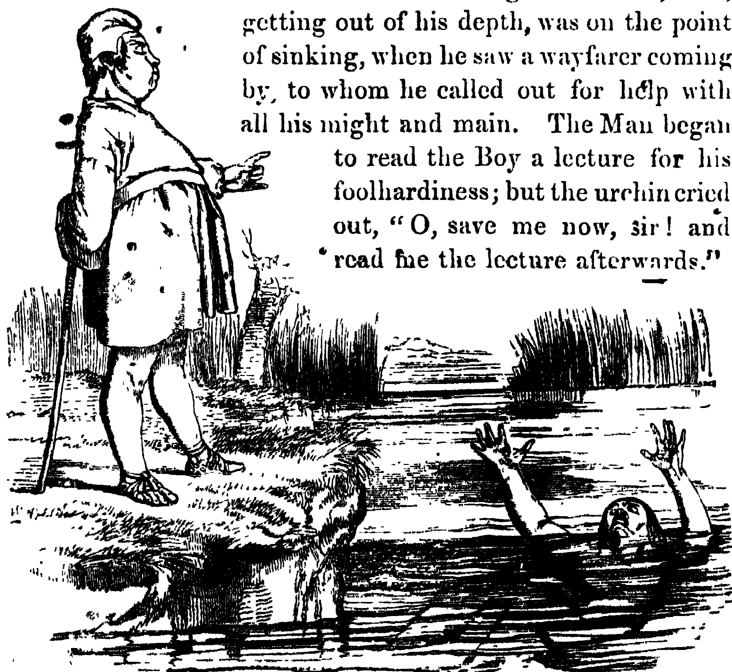
Better scare a thief than snare him.

Fable 196.—THE THREE TRADESMEN.

There was a city in expectation of being besieged, and a council was called accordingly to discuss the best means of fortifying it. A Bricklayer gave his opinion that no material was so good as brick for the purpose. A Carpenter begged leave to suggest that timber would be far preferable. Upon which a Currier started up, and said, "Sirs, when you have said all that can be said, there is nothing in the world like leather."

Fable 197.—THE BOY BATHING.

A Boy was bathing in a river, and, getting out of his depth, was on the point of sinking, when he saw a wayfarer coming by, to whom he called out for help with all his might and main. The Man began to read the Boy a lecture for his foolhardiness; but the urchin cried out, "O, save me now, sir! and read me the lecture afterwards."





FABLE 198.—VENUS AND THE CAT.

A CAT having fallen in love with a young man, besought Venus to change her into a girl, in the hope of gaining his affections. The Goddess, taking compassion on her weakness, metamorphosed her into a fair damsel; and the young man, enamoured of her beauty, led her home as his bride. As they were sitting in their chamber, Venus, wishing to know whether in changing her form she had also changed her nature, set down a Mouse before her. The Girl, forgetful of her new condition, started from her seat, and pounced upon the Mouse as if she would have eaten it on the spot; whereupon the Goddess, provoked at her frivolity, straightway turned her into a Cat again.

What is bred in the bone will never out of the flesh.



FABLE 199.—MERCURY AND THE SCULPTOR.

MERCURY, having a mind to know in what estimation he was held among men, disguised himself as a traveller, and going into a Sculptor's workshop, began asking the price of the different statues he saw there. Pointing to an image of Jupiter, he asked how much he wanted for that. "A drachma," said the image-maker. Mercury laughed in his sleeve, and asked, "How much for this of Juno?" The man wanted a higher price for that. Mercury's eye now caught his own image. "Now, will this fellow," thought he, "ask me ten times as much for this, for I am the mes-

senger of heaven, and the source of all his gain." So he put the question to him, what he valued that Mercury at. "Well," says the Sculptor, "if you will give me my price for the other two, I will throw you that into the bargain."

They who are over anxious to know how the world values them, will seldom be set down at their own price.

Fable 200.—THE FARMER AND THE DOGS.

A Farmer, during a severe winter, being shut up by the snow in his farm-house, and sharply pressed for food, which he was unable to get about to procure, began consuming his own sheep. As the hard weather continued, he next ate up his goats. And at last—for there was no break in the weather—he betook himself to the plough-oxen. Upon this, the Dogs said to one another, "Let us be off; for since the master, as we see, has had no pity on the working oxen, how is it likely he will spare us?"

When our neighbour's house is on fire, it is time to look to our own.

Fable 201.—THE HUNTER AND THE WOODMAN.

A Man went out Lion-hunting into a forest, where meeting with a Woodman, he asked him if he had seen any tracks of a Lion, and if he knew where his lair was. "Yes," says the Man, "and if you will come with me I will show you the Lion himself." At this the Hunter, turning ghastly pale, and his teeth chattering, he said, "Oh! thank you; it was the Lion's track, not himself, that I was hunting."

A coward can be a hero at a distance; it is presence of danger that tests presence of mind.

FABLE 202.—THE MONKEY AND THE FISHERMEN.

A MONKEY was sitting up in a high tree, when, seeing some Fishermen laying their nets in a river, he watched what they were doing. The Men had no sooner set their nets, and retired a short distance to their dinner, than the Monkey came down from the tree, thinking that he would try his hand at the same sport. But in attempting to lay the nets he got so entangled in them, that being well nigh choked, he was forced to exclaim: "This serves me right; for what business had I, who know nothing of fishing, to meddle with such tackle as this?"

FABLE 203.—THE MILLER, HIS SON, AND THEIR ASS.

A MILLER and his Son were driving their Ass to a neighbouring fair to sell him. They had not gone far when they met with a troop of girls returning from the town, talking



and laughing. "Look there!" cried one of them, "did you ever see such fools, to be trudging along the road on foot, when they might be riding!" The old Man, hearing

this, quietly bade his son get on the Ass, and walked along merrily by the side of him. Presently they came up to a group of old men in earnest debate. "There!" said one of them, "it proves what I was a-saying. What respect is shown to old age in these days? Do you see that idle young



rogue riding, while his old father has to walk?—Get down, you scapegrace! and let the old man rest his weary limbs." Upon this the Father made his Son dismount, and got up himself. In this manner they had not proceeded far when they met a company of women and children. "Why, you lazy old fellow!" cried several tongues at once, "how can



you ride upon the beast, while that poor little lad there can hardly keep pace by the side of you." The good-natured Miller stood corrected, and immediately took up his Son behind him. They had now almost reached the town.

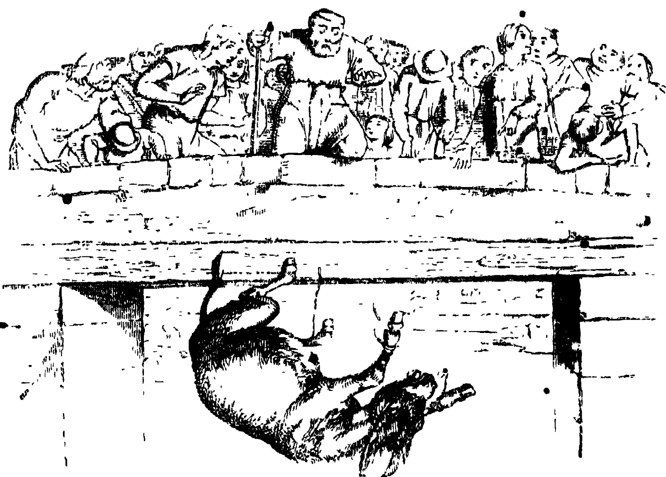


"Pray, honest friend," said a townsman, "is that Ass your own?" "Yes," says the old Man. "O! One would not have thought so," said the other, "by the way you load him. Why, you two fellows are better able to carry the poor beast



than he you!" "Anything to please you," said the old Man; "we can but try." So, alighting with his Son, they

tied the Ass's legs together, and by the help of a pole endeavoured to carry him on their shoulders over a bridge that led to the town. This was so entertaining a sight that the people ran out in crowds to laugh at it; till the Ass, not liking the noise nor his situation, kicked asunder the cords that bound him, and, tumbling off the pole, fell into the river. Upon this the old Man, vexed and ashamed, made the best of his way home again—convinced that by endeavouring to please everybody he had pleased nobody, and lost his Ass into the bargain.



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LONDON

R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS,

BREAD STREET HILL.